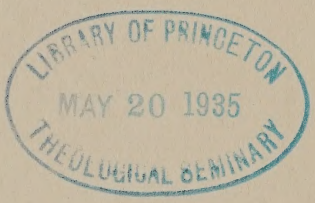

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THE STORY OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY

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The Story of

RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY

By Joseph McCabe

Edited, with an Introduction,
by E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS

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Introduction

By E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS

THE scholarship, immense and convincing, of the present volume will enlighten any reader (although I trust few are actually in need of such enlightenment) concerning the absurdity of a charge often made: namely, the charge that there is something foolish, presumptuous, shallow, smart-alecky and the like in the criticism of religious ideas and institutions. One almost apologizes for mentioning this belittlement of anti-religious thinkers: yet it is a stock in trade of preachers, of lay defenders of the faith, and is not unheard among men who have some pretensions to culture. One still hears it said that there is something juvenile—an intellectual immaturity—in attacking the Church, the idea of God, the supposed sacred truth of the Bible, the history of ecclesiastical power, and the rest. Confronted by such an attitude, one may ask a few leading questions: Is the subject of religion important? Granting the importance of the subject, should one accept religion carelessly or conventionally? Or should one seriously study the subject, with a view only to ascertaining the facts and clarifying one's attitude by the light of reason? Or should one merely be indifferent?

Of course indifference means presumably a criticism and rejection of religion: or perhaps it means that one has a serene faith which needs no expression: or that one has, when brought to the question, a formal belief without real interest. However, to have no opinion about religion is to be idle-minded. A very little thinking—the simplest kind of thinking about life—brings us to questions of a religious bearing: where, that is to say, we have to choose between science—or common sense—and religion; between facts and rhetoric; between history and mythology; and, in fine, between free thought and enslaving traditional forms. It is not that we must have some religion, or that life needs a religious explanation. But as such explanations have been notoriously insisted upon, as religion has said thus and so about life, the thoughtful man is forced to a decision. Whoever is interested in ideas cannot be indifferent to religion. Intellectually he may have no respect for it: but a disrespectful opinion is, even so, an opinion of decided importance.

What, then, are the true materials of opinion? Not one-sided reading: not a few platitudes: not a loose complaisance toward allegedly sacred traditions: not, above all, a preconceived notion

that belief in religion is sacred and high-minded while disbelief is somehow indecent, low-minded and unruly. One should approach religion, as any other subject, in a strictly realistic manner. Is the power of thought, of reason, man's highest power? Then use it on religion. Are facts worth while? Then let their worth be recognized, quite in the scientific spirit, in the controversy about religion. Of what value is an opinion which is not supported by so much as an hour's genuine reflection and study?

Religion cannot claim exemption from being critically weighed in the scales of knowledge. It must stand or fall by the facts. History, science, philosophy, common sense—all that man knows and the best that man has thought—enter seriously into this controversy. In human progress, there has been a plain and growing intellectual tendency, as well as a broadly social and emotional tendency, to make religion justify itself, to force it relentlessly on the defensive. Oracles lose their impressiveness. Doubtless—certainly in civilized or historic time—there have always been skeptics. Their number has increased, with the impetus of irresistible logic, as knowledge has grown. And it is but natural that this age, so enlightened by science and swept by such broad vigorous currents of liberalism, should be progressively skeptical in its attitude toward religion. It is too difficult—or why not say bluntly that it is impossible?—to reconcile the ideas of religion with modern knowledge.

It is not rationalism that is flippant and poorly based. It is not a sign of foolishness but of good sense, yes and considerably more than the average amount of information, to call in question the old theology and mysticism, even when it disguises itself not very artfully as "Modernism." It is religion that has always made preposterous, even frivolous, and indefensible claims. Shallow and sentimentally weak thinkers are more apt to cling to the ancient faith. Clear, relentless thinking brings one inevitably to a rejection of the whole religious viewpoint, of all the appeals to faith, of all the arguments—and how poor they generally are!—for the holy myths and dogmas.

Exposing the silliness of the charge that atheism or agnosticism is the mental mode of fools, there is the long roll of brilliant rationalists who at one vital point or another—and some of them at all points—challenged the religious ideology. Were Voltaire and the French encyclopedists fools? Was Goethe a fool? Or Heine? Or Gibbon? Or Darwin? Huxley? Haeckel? Or Georg Brandes? Is Clarence Darrow a fool or simply a crank who, from some obscure perversity, refuses to comfort himself with the "beautiful idea" of immortality? Or do such men, extraordinarily intelligent and well-informed, have strong and not lightly acquired reasons for their disbelief? And finally is Joseph McCabe—a world scholar, whose intellect is full-ripe with nearly half a century of prodigiously har-

vested learning—to be identified as a fool or a mere frivolous disputer because forsooth his very learning and power of reasoning have made religion intellectually impossible for him? That would indeed be the last word of utterly foolish paradox! The case against religion is formidable. It is compellingly reasonable. It is historical and scientific.

And on this subject of religion Joseph McCabe is the greatest authority in the world. He brings to its consideration an encyclopedic range of knowledge. He pursues it inexorably into every obscure corner. No aspect, no argument, escapes him. He is brilliant indeed—but it is not the brilliance of a hasty, clever, simply argumentative attack. He is the greatest of all rationalists, the most powerful and devastating critic of religion, because he wields such a perfect scholarly equipment. He has every needed weapon readily at his command, drawing at will and accurately from the armory of modern knowledge.

In discussing the abstract ideas of religion, he is invincible, chiefly because he takes the course of common sense straight to the heart of the question. It is wonderful how effective it is to be reasonable—only this and nothing more, yet what a great deal it is in a world where all discussions are so amazingly confused with bunk. Take the idea of immortality. We know that the way of all life is toward death. We have not so much as a pin-point of evidence in proof of any life after death. Death, the irrefragable ultimate fact, obviously ends all for the individual. There is no reason in nature for immortality but it is rather the extreme of unreason, which becomes more inconceivable, so to speak, the more one reflects upon it. The wish for immortality signifies no more than the many other vain wishes which men have. If for the sake of argument one should grant the idea of immortality, who can figure out any definition or shape of immortality that would be even plausible? The "soul" which is supposed to be immortal is itself a mere supposition, having no better standing than that of a myth. In short, the facts completely bear against the notion of another life and there is not the least indication of a fact to support the notion. It is, when all is said, a quite simple matter of reasoning. One need not be profound about it nor quote Greek and Latin nor play a puzzle game with Biblical texts (and indeed these texts, without authority or consistency, never serve any purpose save that of obscurantism).

It is thus that McCabe directs the light of reason upon the central arguments of religion. He has, one should add, this superior advantage: his reasoning, so delightfully and persuasively simple, is completely in line with the teaching of modern science: it is the reasoning, not alone of a good thinker, but of a thorough scholar. Concerning the idea of God, McCabe follows the same reasonable style of discussion. Here the scientific background is more important. By his unaided reason, a man might find plausible arguments

for the existence of a God. Or, following reason to an atheistic conclusion, he could say that he had no knowledge of and therefore no belief in a God: and that the idea of God does not explain life but suggests a greater mystery. But McCabe goes much further and, on the scientific grounds of evolution, shows the folly and futility of belief in a God. He shows that the classic arguments for this belief—design in nature, the necessity of a creator, a legislator to decree the "laws of nature," and the like—do not agree with the facts: that they are based, first and last, upon misconceptions and loose analogies: that, as science has given a natural explanation of life, any pretense of a supernatural explanation is worthless: and that, with regard to all unsolved questions, it is only common sense to follow the method of natural investigation—in short, to follow still the paths of wisdom that have already proved so richly profitable. What McCabe shows is that there is not a single argument for the belief in God which is reasonably and scientifically tenable. One's reason, even though one is but scantily familiar with science, may make one skeptical of a God: and McCabe adds cogent, authoritative force to that skepticism.

It is far more than destructive work. From it emerges a clearer, more coherent, more convincing picture of the universe and the evolution of life. One has in place of a childish view (and at bottom theology is childish, however rarefied and involved may be its logical efforts) a really mature, intelligible view of things. The man who has given little thought to religion in its wider implications—let us say, to the meaning of life—will find in Joseph McCabe a teacher who is capable of guiding him from the lower grades of confused faith or uncertainty into the higher school of thoughtful, scientific knowledge.

In the way of *argument* on religion, if in no other way, "The Story of Religious Controversy" would stand as an invaluable masterpiece. It covers the subject so completely. Nothing is taken for granted—old and new, simple and refined, the points in dispute are brought carefully under scrutiny. The common defense mechanism of belief and the more elaborate philosophic mechanism (which last, by the way, could never serve as a popular or powerful religion) are examined with equal care. Whatever has been importantly or widely alleged in behalf of religion is answered by McCabe: not answered negligently but in the precise, perfect way of the scholar. There have been many books and articles about religion, dealing ably with various special phases: this book is a fundamental synthesis of all that can intelligently, modernly be written on the subject. It is the most important work ever written on religion by the man who is best qualified in every way for such an immense task.

It does not, of course, finally dispose of this monumental folly —and, yes, this terrible curse—of the human race. One might make

such an optimistic claim if it were certain that everyone would read and fairly grasp the message of McCabe's scholarship, rationalism, and humanity. But that is too much to hope. The attack upon religion, both as an intellectual viewpoint and as a social-political force, will necessarily be repeated: certainly the periodical controversy will not soon die. But the reassurance of skeptics and humanists lies in the fact that the tendencies of our advancing civilization are weightily on their side. If religion is not yet dead, it is dying. It remains but to persist in and complete the work of ridding humanity of this hoary and horrible incubus.

Horrible! Whoever may regard this as an extreme word will, I dare say, think better of my English when he has finished this book. In some aspects religion is amusing, or grotesque, or contemptible, or pathetic: but, taking its story largely and without exaggerating the facts, it has been a horrible burden and snare to mankind.

Let me say here that this kind of plain speaking is one of McCabe's qualities that I most admire. He does not seek pretty words for ghastly things. He does not compromise truth for the sake of politeness. He does not step timidly on tiptoe for fear of disturbing someone's faith or offending someone's sensibilities. He assumes that grown people want a serious, candid discussion of serious things and that the ideas of men are not to be treated as tenderly privileged "sore spots." It has indeed been this very passionate emotionalism, this stressed overawing reverence, this meticulously polite and evasive reticence which has conspired to prolong the superstitious enslavement of the race. We cannot find the truth in slippery, dodging words. We cannot nurse petulantly our prejudices and expect to rise above them. Facts will not help us unless we face them squarely as facts, without subterfuge or disguise.

This is another reason, besides that of his scholarly equipment, why McCabe is just the man to survey the large and difficult field of religious controversy. He is honest and fearless. He is free from any influence, obvious or subtle, which might lead another man to soften or gently falsify the picture where he should be as severe and direct and uncompromising as the facts themselves. Together with the vast amount of deliberately dishonest writing about religion there has been much that, if not dishonest in intent, has been false in effect because of a desire to make a friendly case. It is remarkable, as McCabe has frequent cause to mention, how even good scholars will let a religious bias creep into their work—will, perhaps, even go contrary to their own facts in an effort to interpret these same facts favorably to the Church. For instance, H. G. Wells misrepresents the Pagan civilization and incorrectly credits the Church with such social reforms as the encouragement of education and the elevation of woman to a higher, fairer place: and McCabe, by

chapter and verse, exposes the falsity of this version, which is after all a sorry commonplace of Christian apologists.

So it is clear how important is McCabe's own entire freedom and integrity as well as scholarly care in this discussion of religion. He is fair. He does not descend to unworthy trifles or quibbles in his attack or, I should say, his severely truthful record and exposition. It is not, indeed, necessary for a man who has such a mighty weapon as knowledge to call inferior and less effective weapons into play. Having his background of broad research, McCabe holds a perfect case against religion and he does no more than present that case fairly, adequately, expertly. And relentlessly, as I have said: he yields no weak, false favors. One can almost, for a moment, feel a little sorry for the earnest, determined defender of religion, who imagines that life would be intolerable without his Christian faith and mythology, as he sees his cardhouse of illusion scattered by the inexorable gale of facts. One's pity is tempered by the realization of two things: the truth is much better for any man than a baseless and hollow faith: and, where the will to believe is strong enough, unwelcomed truth is turned away from the mind's closed door.

I am not so foolish as to believe that a full and convincing argument—an argument that, as I see it, is irresistible to reason—is bound to impress everyone in the same logical way. To paraphrase the familiar saying, there are prejudices of the heart or of self-interest or of early training which no amount of reason can overcome. (Even so, McCabe shows that the heart too revolts against religion and what is supposed to be a comfort is really felt as a gigantic mockery.) There are devout persons who will be frightened away by a glance at this book, not giving it a chance to destroy, as they fervidly express it, their faith; some will be able to read it through and, remarkable as it may seem, emerge with faith unshaken; many others will be disillusioned—wholesomely, for there is in McCabe a sane, robust optimism and no one can help being strengthened who comes in full, understanding contact with his mind; and, again, there are many skeptics who will discover in this book a vastly interesting and important groundwork of knowledge for their general attitude, more than a groundwork, an impressive edifice, of enlightened culture.

For McCabe, going far beyond mere disputation on ideas, guides the reader through a wide field or many fields of learning. Here is knowledge, tremendously important, of which many well-educated persons are not aware: knowledge, it hardly need be said, which is not given in the schools. One reason, as McCabe emphasizes, is that school-communicated knowledge is rather carefully arranged to avoid conflict with powerful institutions and to keep clear of "controversial subjects." Yet these "controversial subjects" are, of course, the ones upon which we most crave enlightenment.

They are the most significant and we do not want the fact shut off just when they begin to enlighten us most curiously and significantly. We do not want simply a string of superficial details and dates in history. Rather do we seek a comprehensible, realistic picture of the past, a knowledge of the genuine character and influence of institutions, an understanding of the way men lived and what their ideas meant to them. We want complete living history (as nearly complete as scholarship can make it) and not an imperfect skeleton.

If this history exposes religion in a bad light, shows it to have been an influence hostile to civilized aims, contradicts the false history with which religion has sought to justify itself, certainly it is vital that we should know the truth. Truth, justice, liberty—these may be abstractions, ideal terms, but they have a human meaning and value. Has the Church been friendly or inimical to truth, justice and liberty, as these terms are understood by civilized man? It does not matter how anti-religious the answer is: we want that answer truly and unsparingly. There is nothing worth while that can be said in behalf of religion if it can be shown that it has been at war with the civilized tendencies of the human race. And this is exactly and overwhelmingly what McCabe shows in "The Story of Religious Controversy."

It is on this ground of history that McCabe proceeds in most deadly fashion to undermine all the pompous falsehood of religious claims. Mere argument offers the possibility of endless slippery evasions and distortions; but the facts of history are unanswerable and commanding in their import. Not all the theological solemnity and dexterity in the world, not the best (and poor enough) arguments for God and faith and "the religious sense" of mankind, can stand defensibly against the actual record of the Church and the working of religious policy. On its record, the Church is condemned. On its record, religion is the enemy of civilization. And especially the fine claims made in behalf of Christianity are false.

There is no essential uncertainty about this record. Indeed, in a general way it is known among men who have not studied it extensively and who, knowing the truth only in outline, are less affected by it than otherwise they would be. It is general if vague knowledge, for example, that the history of the Church in past ages is superstitious, cruel and intolerant. It is known, vaguely, by the average man that monstrous follies and crimes have flourished in the name of religion, Christianity included. It is not an unfamiliar story that the struggle for freedom has been a struggle against Church and State. Yet lying details, polite excuses, evasions, and apologies have obscured the force of the truth as a whole. Various claims are made that are in flat contradiction of the broad truth—supported completely and precisely by the facts—that religion has been the enemy of progress. Nothing, it would seem, could well be

more grotesque than the effort in this day to make the Church appear as a liberal, humanizing, uplifting force. It was the sharp and terrible contrary. Think of the astonishing effrontery of this claim when we commonly and correctly identify by the name "Dark Ages" a stretch of dismal, bloody, ignorant centuries of Christian supremacy!

If it could be shown that the Church had even tried to help progress, then we should perforce say that, considering its enormous power, it was strangely incompetent and ineffective. But we know—and none shows more thoroughly than McCabe—that the Church did not even, taken on the whole as an institution and policy of social life, have a progressive disposition. Priests supported kings in keeping men bound to tyranny and superstition—only kings, on occasion, were most liberal. Both the divine-sleight-of-priests and the divine-might-of-kings were founded necessarily on the ignorance of the masses. Freedom of thought and life was incompatible with every dogma of the Church and, above all, with the harsh greedy power that the Church maintained as its supernaturally sanctioned right.

But modern Christians say that is only the past of the Church. And Protestants place the burden of guilt wholly upon Catholicism, as if religion itself were not an intolerant force. As for the latter apology, not only is it true that Protestantism was fully as illiberal and dogmatic and punitive, insofar as the division of sects left it the power; but it is further true that Protestantism—the successful challenge to the one supreme religious power of Catholicism—coincided with a wider movement of liberty, of which it was, in a limited way, one of the effects. Such men as Calvin and Luther and Knox were not interested in liberty as a genuine, general principle. They wanted power for their own dogmas. It was, one might say, a family quarrel among bigots. None of these bigots believed in free thought, in free institutions, in free progress. Taken merely as a religious change, Protestantism could not have advanced—it had neither the spirit nor the knowledge to advance—the liberty of mankind. There was, however, an upheaval of social forces that was immensely more significant than a mere schism of bogey-ridden theologians. There were intellectual factors, critical and humanistic, and material factors of growing trade, exploration, invention, the expansion and solidification of secular life. Europe strained against the tight bonds of religion. The challenge to ancient wrongs and superstitions could not ignore but must specially direct itself against the Church.

To be sure, the greatest crimes of religion belong to the past. It could be more monstrously harmful four centuries ago than it can be today. Then it had more power. The Church today is reformed, so to speak, because it is weaker and less capable of mischief. It cannot compel belief—or silence and the appearance of belief.

It cannot control the lives of men. At least religious fanaticism, although it does have a political power in certain things, such as for example in moralistic legislation and even in baldly Christian-doctrinal legislation (Sunday laws), is not overt, extensive, and menacing as it was until quite recently in the story of mankind. In a liberal world, the Church itself must be different in self-defense. It would be ridiculous for it to attempt seriously the enforcement of threats, penalties and claims that were once all too common and deadly real.

It is not, then, the essential truth to say that religion in the modern world has reformed; but that it *has been reformed,* restrained, driven back from its formerly proud and powerful position. We live in an infinitely brighter, freer, richer age—but with no thanks due the Church for our advancement. The struggle for human rights was waged by skeptics and liberals, without the approval, let alone the support, of the Church; indeed, against the bitter opposition of the Church, which allied itself stubbornly with the forces of reaction. Religion is less evil actually today because it does not play such an important rôle in society. Even church members as a rule do not try to make religion the binding rule of life.

The indictment of history is—certainly as to the Christian religion—clear and forcible: When religion has flourished in real power, there has been a low degree of civilization. The growth of civilization and the decline of religion have proceeded almost equally. I say this is particularly true as respects Christianity. It has in its heyday exceeded all other religions in intolerance and tyrannical pretensions over social-political life. It has been the most hostile to culture. The Greek-Roman civilization was not dominated by an absolute religion as was medieval Europe by Christianity. There was tolerance, avowed skepticism, humanistic culture, and a power of free speculation under Paganism which was only matched in the beginning of the modern age. One may say that the Pagans were fortunate in having a number of gods instead of one terrible, dogmatic, jealous God. When the gods multiply, mere man, it seems, has a better chance.

I would not play down the fact that superstition was rife in the Greek-Roman world. And I would add that our world today, with its greater scientific enlightenment and freedom from religion, is a far better world. It would certainly appear that we have outgrown any possible excuse for superstition. We know far more scientifically about life than educated Greeks and Romans knew. This does not mean, in one sense, that we are smarter than they: but we are better informed: we have the advantage of progress.

Even so, let it be said plainly that we are indebted in an infinitely greater degree to Pagan culture than we are to the "Christian culture" of ten centuries. The fact is that during the long medieval night there was no "Christian culture" worthy of the

name. There was even a wretched, brutish ignorance of Pagan culture. In fact, a splendidly cultured civilization—the Moorish civilization—existed with strangely little appreciation (in Spain, Sicily, and northwestern Africa) contemporaneously with a Europe that was only a step above barbarism.

This is history, someone may say, and what has it to do with religion? All this and much besides which McCabe historically presents in "The Story of Religious Controversy" simply places religion in relation to the development, the culture, and the struggling ideals of mankind. It is precisely the most effective way to deal with the subject of religion. As a controversialist alone, many might not care to read McCabe. As an historian of religion, seen accurately and vastly in connection with the broad picture of social and intellectual life in the past, he must command the interest and the very serious thought of every reader. He is important, not just because he has something to *argue*, but because he has something to *tell*. He carries conviction by the weight of educational material rather than by devices of logic or rhetoric.

For a long time men argued about religion without getting anywhere. When they began to investigate the facts about religion in history—the evolution of religious ideas—the actual operations of religious policies—the true relations of religion and morality, religion and government, religion and culture: then truly rapid progress was made in liberating the human mind from the misty, confused dogmas of the past. This evolutionary, comparative, critical attack upon religion has been carried to the highest point of scholarship and art by Joseph McCabe.

He fires incessantly a mighty machine-gun of facts at the ideas, the sentiments, the policies of religion—at the history of religion in all its aspects. Nor does he ask the reader to trust his, McCabe's, own word—although he has the standing of an authority in this field which he has made eminently his own. But all along he cites his authorities. He refers to chapter and verse. He builds, as it were, the story of religious controversy carefully and expertly out of the truthful materials of world knowledge. And it is, by the way, a fascinating story. It has, with all else, the charm of the deeply absorbing narrative. Despite the fact that religion is supposed to be such an interesting subject, how it has crowded the libraries with dull books! But McCabe is never dull. He illumines with life, as with learning, the whole sweep of this so generally perplexed controversy.

The whole sweep—it is all here. The story of religion in the life of mankind, from the dawn of superstition to the modern age of skepticism, is told in vivid completeness and careful significance. Being strictly scientific, McCabe follows the evolutionary method. You can only discuss a subject intelligently by tracing the manner in which it has evolved: thus thinking at its best is the history of an

idea. How did man come to be religious? Was he always religious? What forms of religion have appealed to him and why? Such questions, to name a few, are answered by McCabe in a natural way.

There is nothing mystical about it. One sees that religion, like morals and government and war and industry, like all things good and bad, has been produced by natural conditions. It has evolved, and we should certainly expect that as man grows in knowledge his ideas would become less crude, more refined, and finally more enlightened: so that now we have less religion as the years progressively increase. But there was a time when man had no religion. Religion is, after all, an abstract conception in greater or less degree: and very primitive man was innocent of abstract thinking. He was very literal and not imaginative.

One myth that McCabe unmasks at the very outset is that of a "religious instinct" in man. It is a familiar argument: that man naturally, inherently possesses an "instinct" for belief in and worship of religion (just as we have been told, with equal inaccuracy, that he has an innate conscience). Man, however, came very crudely by way of animism and nature worship and ancestor worship to religions of more priestly craft and creed. He wondered and guessed about life, impelled very strongly by fear and more and more misled by conscious organizations of priesthood, and this blundering process is sometimes praised as a divinely implanted and inspired "instinct" for religion: an instinct, so called, which has betrayed men into the most amazingly foolish and contradictory notions: an instinct which has been one of misleading rather than leading: it is evident that there has been as little instinct, of any dependably guiding sort, in religion as there has been reason.

Simply to scan the variety of religious beliefs, as they are presented in "The Story of Religious Controversy," is enough to reveal the essential truth, that in their faiths and dogmas men have been but struggling blindly. They have not been inspired. Nothing has been revealed to them. They are dazzled by miracles. They dread bad spirits and appeal piously to good spirits. And they proceed naturally from the idea of many gods to the idea of one God. It is still repeated, for example, as an eminent virtue of the Christian religion that it gave to the world the sublime conception of monotheism. By that token, we are told, Christianity was inspired from heaven. Yet the Egyptians, long before, held that idea and so, though less clearly, did the Babylonians.

In fact, McCabe shows that the Christian Bible is largely a collection of legends and moral codes and conceptions, sometimes crude and again poetic, assimilated from older religions. Concerning this, scholars are agreed. We perceive anew and more forcefully how little touched are the ideas of the average Christian—even of many educated Christians—by knowledge which is, among scholars, commonplace: commonplace, but never brought together so connect-

edly, conclusively, and sharply as by McCabe in this masterpiece, this history of the most astonishing order of ideas known to man.

It is the originality, the singularity, the precious and peculiar virtue of Christianity which its defenders have most cherished as a "proof" of its divine origin and sanction. Yet this originality is shown to be non-existent. It is a myth, along with the other myths, fibbed and cribbed to make the weird mélange known as Christianity. The Old Testament is shown to be what McCabe calls plainly a work, in large, of "priestly forgery." These may seem impolite words: but when the reader has learned how these "holy" books were fabricated, how spurious they are, and how deliberately they were meant to deceive, he will be so interested in the truth that he will forget the charge of impoliteness. He will be equally interested to learn the antiquity and the various expression in other times and places of moral ideas which Christians suppose to have been original with Jesus. Its analysis of the Bible, of the triumph of Christianity, and of the evolution of Christian doctrines under the hands of the Church fathers entitles this book to a place in the front rank of religious criticism: and taken in its still wider sweep it is, as I say, the masterpiece both critical and historical of religious controversy.

The very simple idea of the average Christian is that Jesus gave the gospel truth to the world; that with speedy and singular unanimity the world accepted this truth—that indeed it burst suddenly as a brilliant, beautiful light upon a world all in darkness; and that Christianity, as a system of doctrine, stems directly in an unbroken and uncorrupted line from these divinely inspired and self-evident and undisputed teachings of Jesus. It was a good deal more patchwork and confusion than that implies, and McCabe traces the story clearly enough. Christianity was the work of men, and it was worked into something quite different from the comparatively simple (though not therefore sensible) evangelism ascribed to Jesus: which departure from purity one would not be so rash as to call either a gain or a loss.

In representing Christianity as the great, pure, miraculously brought salvation of the world, the defenders of this faith have had to rely upon glaring falsifications of Pagan society. To this day in familiar Christian rhetoric the term "Pagan" is employed to connote immorality, impiety and in general a low, unblessed state of civilization. There is no doubt that this false picture is innocently (*i.e.*, ignorantly) stressed by many preachers: these preachers, for that matter, do not understand their own age and how can we expect them to know about life, about thought and morals, in ancient Greece and Rome? There is, however, a great deal of consciously dishonest misrepresentation. And one wonders how even a moderately intelligent person, though his reading has given him only a brief glimpse of the art, philosophy, culture and well-organ-

ized social life of Greece and Rome, could be deceived by these libels on Paganism. The truth is that two of the most lofty ethical systems in history—the Stoic and the Epicurean philosophy—were Pagan. Morals were far higher in the Greek-Roman world than they were in Christian Europe for centuries after the fall of ancient civilization: as high as morals are today. As for culture, and all the fine and interesting and orderly things that make a civilization, the Pagan world was brilliantly superior to Christian times throughout the weary, wretched rule of faith supreme. By the middle of the nineteenth century (says McCabe) the world had only reached once more the level of civilization at which the Pagan world stood when Christianity came bringing not light but darkness.

Now, with our immense scientific and material development, we have the greatest age of all. And in reaching this height, humanity has found Christianity a dragging rather than a lifting and liberating force. In no part of this story do McCabe's facts bear with such intimate, deadly effect upon religion. For it is the last and most stubborn claim of religion—to be specific, in our world and time, of Christianity—that, whatever its errors of doctrine and its mistakes in this or that sphere of policy, it has been a great purifying, instructing, emancipating agency. It is particularly claimed that Christianity brought relief for the workers, respect for women, and regard for education. Which is—McCabe drives the point home—precisely what the Church did *not*. The fact that the Church was indifferent when not actively opposed to such reforms is brought out by McCabe with his usual thoroughness and accuracy of detail. He settles the case, in this important phase, completely. And surely the broad picture ought to be familiar to even a casual student of history. Medievalism is synonymous with ignorance, poverty and degradation. Sodden serfdom was the rule. Women had a lower status than in Greece and Rome—indeed, Christianity was reluctant to grant them the useless jewel which it peculiarly valued, a "soul." To speak of Christianity and education in the same breath is ridiculous—or, rather, it is in itself an indictment—when one reflects that illiteracy prevailed almost entirely during centuries of Christian power. What we see is that today we have greatly enlarged freedom, education, and equality of sex in social life: but far from owing this to Christianity we owe it to anti-Christian agencies of liberation. To fight for freedom was (and to how great an extent it still is!) to fight against the Church. Striking the fetters of body and mind from the race, how could the Church, itself a chief enslaver, have been ignored by those libertarians!

The modern world is a world of secular advancement and religious defeat. Many preachers realize this and we see what are probably the last efforts to save religion in the thinner and thinner "Modernism" of today. It may be said, then, that we are in the last

phase of religion—its weakening, retreating, dying phase, giving way before a full-armed, world-sweeping, skeptical materialism. We are not coming to a "religion of humanity." We are turning away from religion and toward humanity. You see what this signifies. It is now possible to tell the complete story of religion—it is possible and this is just what has been done in the present volume by Joseph McCabe. Here is the complete survey of religion—of all religious controversy—and, defining all, the last word of rationalism. To quote McCabe, it is not that the half-gods have gone and the gods are arriving. But the gods have disappeared (in the clouds of superstition whence they came), the half-gods have shrunk to quarter-gods, the quarter-gods have diminished to mere specks of scarce-remembered fantasy, and now all that is left of God or the gods is the subtle, all too subtle, and fast-escaping gas of "Modernism." And the less God, how much more world and life!

THE STORY OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY

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CHAPTER I

The Revolt Against Religion

The World-Revolt Against Religion—A New Age of Mankind—The Origin of the Rebellion—The Battle of the Nineteenth Century —Enter Science—The Voice of the Heart

The World-Revolt Against Religion

SOME years ago I sat with a group of scholars in a room of the beautiful Oxford University, in England, and we passed the time with a new game, a scholars' game. We were all masters of some branch of history or literature, and we each chose the age in which we would have preferred to live.

In quick review we traveled from solemn Egypt to wonderful Babylon and voluptuous Syria. Athens with its glorious art, Sparta with its stern discipline, Rome with its mighty triumphs, captivated one or others of us, and the springtime of the modern age, the Italy of the Renaissance, the France of Louis XIV, the England of Shakespeare, spread all their color and life and freedom before us.

But there was a general agreement that this age in which we live is the most interesting on which the sun has ever shone. It is an age of reconstruction. Somehow a finer earth than man ever knew before is struggling into form. We have at least such sense of mastery and power as the world never had before.

The great civilizations of early history remained feudal monarchies for thousands of years. In our time many thrones have been overturned in ten years, and more totter on their foundations. We bring to judgment every tradition and every institution that the past had bequeathed to us. We enslave giant forces, and do with them prodigious things, of which no ancient sage had the dimmest vision.

An inevitable part of the new spirit, the most dramatic and historic part for one who knows the long story of man, is that we summon before our revolutionary tribunal all the religions in the world. Our code is the Rights of Man—a new thing under the

sun. Our justification is that we have found the world full of hoary illusions, like the divine right of kings and constitutions. Our standard is truth and service and we look placidly at the guillotine in the public square to which we commit everything of the "ancient order" that proves not its value in this.

Do not imagine that this is a pleasant picture of a group of pretentious youths and maidens remaking the world in an American city. There is a world-revolt against religion. The new rulers of Turkey are fighting orthodox Mohammedanism. The students of India, of China, of Japan, of Egypt, discuss their historic creeds and sacred books with as little reverence as an Open Forum in Chicago discusses—when it condescends to discuss—the Old Testament.

And from the cities of the world the revolt spreads to the valleys, even to the deserts. I met in London a full-blooded African, a doctor of philosophy, who had been deposed for teaching heresy in a central-African college. A realistic recent French novel, "Batouala," shows the natives pouring back from work on the coast to their primitive villages, to fling ridicule at all religious beliefs. We are broadcasting the revolt, and there is no kraal of blacks or group of Eskimo huts to which it will not penetrate tomorrow.

This is a new phenomenon in history. A strange and wonderful story is the history of religion. We will tell its beginnings in the next chapter, its long and weird developments in later chapters. It is a story of revolutions. Dynasties of gods fall like dynasties of kings, and new dynasties rise. "The gods pass, but God remains," said an eloquent preacher. Good rhetoric, but bad history.

It is a question today of God, not gods. More than two thousand years ago, in Asia, there was a phase of the history of religion something—just a little—like ours. Buddha in India, Kong-fu-tse in China, urged men to concentrate on human problems and "ignore spiritual beings, if there are any." But on the mass of the people they had no permanent influence. It was the same in ancient Greece and Rome. Never before in history was there any movement remotely approaching, in depth and breadth, the modern revolt against religion.

So undeniable is it, that a Christian periodical recently predicted, in an editorial, that the end of the world was at hand, since the reign of Anti-Christ had visibly begun. More serious religious writers, like Dean Inge, the famous spokesman of the Church of England, draw the more sober conclusion that "doctrinal Christianity is doomed." The reign of Christianity as a system of doctrines—any doctrines—is over.

But there are superficial folk who think that the revolt is just a temporary phase of modern life or thought. People have been seduced, they say, by the glamour of science, by the plausibility of

evolution. Already, they cry, science is disowning its offspring, and a new light breaks on the heavy spiritual horizon.

All this is as superficial and inaccurate as religious statistics are. The revolt is no passing phase, but the culmination of a steady historical development during two centuries. It is so little due to science that it was widespread before science began. It was quite general amongst educated people before Darwin wrote a line on evolution. We must understand it aright, and so I take the reader back to the beginning of the revolt and lightly sketch its progress.

A NEW AGE OF MANKIND

The period which inaugurated modern times, as we shall see, is known as the Renaissance or Re-Birth. It was an age of great nervous vitality, like ours: an age of mental intoxication. And one of the reasons was that the imagination of men was fired by the discovery of a new world, America, and of a new universe, for Galileo had shattered the toy universe which had hitherto cramped the thoughts of men.

How many in the seventeenth century knew of the work of Copernicus or Galileo? Comparatively few: for ninety per cent of the people of Europe were unable to read, after a thousand years of absolute domination of the religion which the late Mr. Bryan described as "the greatest patron learning ever had." Only the educated ten percent knew aught of Galileo and the new astronomy, yet the discovery ran like fire through the veins of Europe. The old creed was based, in a sense, on a conception of the universe which was now proved false. The solid firmament which men had imagined above them cracked and rolled away. The mind soared into vast spaces.

But the universe which Galileo and his successors revealed was still puny in comparison with the universe as we see it through the great eye at Mount Wilson Observatory. I will not speak of its vastness. That makes no difference in principle, except that it must disturb any man who persists in thinking that on this earth, this metal speck in a trillion-mile universe, there exists the only race of intelligent beings!

Far more important and unsettling is the discovery of the age of the stars. If all the stars were strewn by the hand of God over the heavens in creation's morn, it would not matter much if they numbered two thousand, or, as they do, over two billions. But if they were so strewn, we should expect them to be of approximately the same age. Yet they differ in age by billions of years. Stars are just rising from their cradles, or still lie in the giant wombs of nebulae; stars hundreds of billions of years old are slowly and feebly sinking out of luminous existence, and between the extremes is a vast population of stars as varied and graduated in age as the throng on a city street in the afternoon. It is a new universe. We see

no hint of a beginning or an end. Life on the planet earth is a brief episode in an eternal process.

Yet, they do not know all this down yonder in the picture-theaters and cafés. But they feel it. The mightiest power that the earth has yet known, science, is vaguely understood to have discovered that the old story of creation and supreme ruler rested on a foundation which has been shattered. The dynasty of gods has fallen. Man must make a new constitution for his new republic, the commonwealth of men.

I touch here only, as a symbol of an illustration, one aspect of the new knowledge which has shaken the old creeds. That new knowledge is the most solid thing, the most permanent and growing thing, the greatest achievement of our age. No petty attempt to shut it out of schools will keep it back. It is the proudest symbol of the triumph of modern man. Of it was born the genius, applied science, which has transformed the face of the earth.

I mentioned schools. They are scattered all over this city, even amongst the grim tenements of the poor workers. Palatial high schools rise here and there, and a short distance away is a university. Downtown is a great public library, and here and there rise the steel towers of radio transmitting stations. We have such knowledge as the world never had before, and we have a machinery for distributing it just as immeasurably beyond anything that the world ever had before.

The greatest writer, one of the greatest thinkers, of the old world was Plato. How many Greeks, would you say, read one of Plato's dialogues during his lifetime? I should say, a few hundred. And now. . . . Some years ago I translated a book, Ernst Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe," and sold half a million copies of it in a few years. I wrote a defense of it, and sold fifty thousand copies of this in a few months. H. G. Wells has sold over five hundred thousand copies of his voluminous "Outline of History."

We thought that our cheap printing was the last word in the diffusion of knowledge, and suddenly a marvelous piece of new machinery, the radio, has been presented to us. From an obscure little room in the heart of London I have told the great story of the birth and death of worlds to a million hearers. From a room in the suburbs of Winnipeg I have talked on evolution to half the astonished farmers of central Canada. And the work, the educational work, of wireless is only in its infancy. Even now the man who has great truths to tell, and the power to articulate them, can speak from Denver or Chicago to the whole of the United States, to people in the remote *aldeas* of Mexico, even to such as can understand in Brazil and Peru. And when we get one universal language, as we will, the truths of science and history and sociology will roll out over the entire earth.

Knowledge spreads subtly, as it did in the Renaissance, and it

begets a new spirit even in men who are not conscious of having any new knowledge. There is a new spirit in our generation. We are apt to resent all authority, but we certainly do resent the authority of dead men. Those generations who lived in ages of profound ignorance had no right to legislate for us. Creeds made in Dark Ages are like drawings made in dark rooms. We are going to reconsider all creeds and institutions which were framed before the light of modern knowledge broke upon the earth.

It is a reasonable attitude. I said "reconsider," remember, not "reject." We will keep what is sound and useful—in moral law or civil law, theory or practice. The profoundly unreasonable man is the one who refuses to reconsider what his fathers taught him, or the man who uses only a one-sided literature, written by interested people, in making his examination of his beliefs. The new generation demands freedom to read both sides and form its own judgment.

And it is precisely in the world of human interests that the new spirit finds its strongest support. What a mass of ancient illusions and delusions we have had to cast aside during the last fifty or hundred years, and how much better and happier the world is for discarding them! Protestant Americans ought to be the first to perceive this. Their fathers broke the tyranny of the Papacy and laughed at its divine claims. They rejected the asceticism (in theory) of medieval Christianity, and permitted the clergy to marry. They maintained that all the world had lied about religion for a thousand years.

Then they turned to illusions of State, and they smashed the supposed divine right of kings. Christian Europe was wrong, they said; pagan Greece and Rome were right. The proper human policy was the Republic. Then they broke the chains of the slave, which the church had blessed for ages. One by one they tore up a thousand ancient illusions: social, medical, economic, political, industrial and domestic. The floor of the nineteenth century was strewn with dishonored traditions and creeds and illusions. The "land of the free" prided itself, in the face of Europe, that it had the courage to dethrone the dead and assert its mastery of its own affairs.

Europe has slowly followed. The whole world rings with disillusion. The Turks tear up the most sacred traditions of their race. The Chinese cut off the pigtail and all that it symbolizes. The Egyptians and Hindus fight for freedom, religious as well as social and political. The Negroes of Africa aspire to form a republic. Mexico defies its church. Empires break up. Kings fly into exile. A hundred thousand pulpits are vacant.

A new age! There never was anything remotely like it under the sun. What a man does in Moscow or Shanghai or Tokio today is known next morning in Memphis or in Lima. Even the monks in the forbidden city of Thibet listen and are moved. Nuns stir in

their convents. Large bodies of Catholic priests petition Rome to abolish celibacy.

And there is a fine sentiment, as well as an assertion of liberty, in all this. Never in the world before was there such a flood of social idealism as there is in modern civilization. That is the most solid answer to those who say that we are degenerating in character. Our world rings with the cry of service and help. A mere list of the social, philanthropic, educational, humanitarian movements of our time would fill a chapter of this book. And they are all new in, and peculiar to, what preachers call scornfully "our materialistic age." Never in the world before was there this concern for peace and brotherhood, for justice to the poorer workers, for the sick and helpless and maimed, for children, for education, for temperance, for suppressing crime and cruelty, for gifts and holidays for poor children, for the thousand and one misfortunes that linger amongst us from the bad old times.

This finer sentiment reacts on religion. It is this, not science, which has forced more than half of Christendom to abandon one of the most distinctive dogmas of Christianity, eternal torment. It is this, not science, which refuses to believe in the primitive curse of the race and the atoning death of Christ. It shrinks from blood and bloody sacrifices and hells. It refuses to worship, because worship was the oriental flattery of sultans and czars.

The heart of man is as much in revolt against traditional religions as is his head. To think of stemming the tide of unbelief by excluding evolution from schools is on a level with the ancient practice of sprinkling vinegar and aromatic herbs in an infected room to check the infection.

It is an entirely new age, a revolutionary age. The struggle of new thoughts and old traditions must now proceed to a finish. It will never again be interrupted and suspended, as it was when the civilization of Athens and Rome perished. There are today forty civilizations with the same ideals, the same questions, the same revolts. If twenty perish, the other score will carry on the work.

THE ORIGIN OF THE REBELLION

Voltaire began it all, someone will impatiently exclaim. It would certainly be difficult to exaggerate the share of that one brilliant writer in founding modern skepticism, but history does not run in that fashion. Movements do not issue, fully armed, from the brain of any Jupiter.

Skepticism goes far back in the history of the Middle Ages. The poet Dante, the very flower of medieval literature, tells us that there was a large group of skeptics of the most radical type at Florence in his day. But those were dangerous times for skeptics. The marketplaces stank with burning human flesh all over Europe. It was nec-

essary first to break the power of the Papacy, as we will tell in later histories of the Renaissance and the Reformation.

We might assign a date for the birth of modern skepticism round about the year 1677, and the birthplace was England. Why, of all countries in the world, England, you will ask. Let me say at once that the germs came to English soil from abroad. The Italian writers, Boccaccio and Petrarch, the French writers Montaigne and Bayle, might be counted the progenitors. All those influences of the Renaissance to which I have referred—the advance of astronomy, the discovery of the East and West Indies, printing, etc.,—made for criticism and skepticism. But in France and Italy the Roman Church was still all-powerful. The noble Giordano Bruno was burned alive as late as 1600 for teaching an enlightened philosophy of the universe.

England was comparatively free, and an English ambassador at Paris, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, brought home from the gay city, amongst his French laces and perfumes and clarets, the germs of the new skepticism.

Not that England had so far been quite innocent of radical doubts. Certain contemporaries of Shakespeare are well known to have been skeptics, or Rationalists, and a careful analysis of Shakespeare's plays shows that the great poet himself was probably a Rationalist. It was not, however, until the middle of the seventeenth century that the first heat of the Reformation abated, and men, tired of the mutual abuse of theologians, began to write freely about religion.

There was still no science worth speaking of, apart from astronomy, though the work of Lord Bacon and Sir Isaac Newton must have helped. But this first phase of skepticism was due rather to two literary influences: first, admiration of Greek and Roman literature and morality, secondly, a candid study of the Bible which the Protestants now urged all men to read. The Catholic taunt that in giving the world the Bible Protestantism led to skepticism, is quite sound. There were now, since the Renaissance, large numbers of gentlemen, besides the clergy, who could read. "Very good," they said, "we will read your Bible," and the result was deadly.

I mentioned the date 1677, because in that year an English bishop, Stellingfleet, published the first orthodox reply to skepticism ("Letter to a Deist"). From the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century there was a long series of brilliant and learned skeptical writers in England: Herbert, Blount, Tindal, Toland, Lord Shaftesbury, Viscount Bolingbroke, Collins and many others. The dreary tyranny of the Puritans was over, or had passed to America. The land rung again with the joy and freedom of the Renaissance. The Church of England was lax and

largely corrupt. Bishops had their mistresses at table in London. Statesmen made bishops of their illegitimate sons.

It is known to few, but it is an easily demonstrable fact, that a Queen of England at this time, Queen Caroline (1683-1737) was a skeptic. She scornfully refused the sacrament of the church when she was dying, and her courtiers and statesmen, who were in great part Rationalists, explicitly assure us that she rejected the Christian faith. As I have shown in my "Biographical Dictionary of Modern Rationalists," the evidence on the point is quite conclusive. Queen Caroline and the greatest statesmen of her time were Rationalists.

In this first phase the skeptics were known as Deists, that is to say, men who believed in God (Deus), but rejected all belief in miracles or revelations, and therefore discarded Christianity.

In modern literature there is some confusion of Deists and Theists. A Theist, properly speaking, is any person who believes in God, whether he believes in revealed religion or not. A Christian is a Theist. The Deist believes in God and immortality, but he regards all religions as natural growths, if not impostures. Infidels, unbelievers, skeptics were other, and vaguer, names given to these early Rationalists (or men who followed reason rather than tradition or authority). All that is material to remember here is that amongst *educated* people there has been a considerable and continuous body of anti-Christians for the last two hundred years.

And this body naturally grew with the spread of education and the improvement of printing. The Catholic who boasts that skepticism was rare before the Reformation conveniently forgets three things: skeptics were burned at the stake; very few people had any education except the clergy; and there were very few books to read. Skepticism grew precisely in proportion to the spread of education and of printed books. The industrial and commercial development of the world brought about a large educated middle class: merchants, doctors, lawyers, higher clerks, politicians, literary men, artists, etc. The works of the English Deists circulated amongst these, and the "Essays" of Montaigne, with occasional flashes of discreet skepticism and the more openly skeptical and exquisitely written "Dictionary" of Bayle were translated for them.

Before we come to Voltaire, the greatest of all the Deists, we have to notice an extension that ought to be known to every American. Most of the great figures in American history at the time of the War of Independence were Deists, some of them even Materialists. Thomas Paine—ignorantly called by Theodore Roosevelt a "filthy little *Atheist*"—was the second greatest Deist in the history of skepticism. His rejection of Christianity was as fervent as his faith in God. Benjamin Franklin was just as unquestionably a Deist, and he himself tells us that he got his ideas from the works of the English Deists. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were demonstrably skeptics.

It is notorious that the king of Prussia, Frederick the Great, the greatest monarch of Europe in his time, was a Deist. The evolution of Germany had been checked by the appalling religious war which had followed the Reformation. Now, in the eighteenth century, the country was again settled and prosperous. A leisured middle class with a taste for letters appeared and increased. Skepticism grew, as it did everywhere, in the same proportion. And with German thoroughness the poets and philosophers—the Goethes, Schillers and Kants—who now appeared, struck a sterner note and carried skepticism to a deeper layer of the religious tradition.

Meantime a certain measure of liberty had been won in France. The Protestants had been massacred, but their deadly enemies, the Jesuits, had in turn been expelled for their notorious abuse of their position. Men were, as elsewhere, tired of the disputes of rival theologies, for Jesuits and Jansenists had fought as bitterly in France as Catholics and Protestants did in England.

Moreover, the French have a nimble wit and a quick sense of humor. Why quibble about doctrines when the clergy themselves, as well as the Court, were flagrantly immoral? Some religious writers talk of Voltaire's love-affairs as if they discredited his skepticism. These people do not seem to know that bishops and cardinals down to the time of the Revolution had their mistresses; that Jesuit priests murdered the frail consciences of the kings and their concubines without a murmur for several generations; that the nunneries of Paris were the classic homes of assignations, and the name *abbé* (cleric) was a title of gallantry. Molière, the great French comedian, was a Rationalist.

Voltaire, as is known, learned Deism in England. But the labored treatises of the English philosophers on the naturalness of the moral law, and their somewhat heavy criticism of errors and absurdities in the Old Testament, now assumed a new form. Voltaire made biblical criticism sparkle. He sprinkled his pages with epigram, wit and naughtiness until ladies of the court and liberal clerics, as well as merchants, doctors and lawyers, found themselves shaking with laughter over stories and statements which had been deemed sacred.

His great contemporary, Jean Jacques Rousseau, also a Deist, appealed to a different temperament. He was serious, emotional, idealistic. He preached a sentimental regard for Christ as a man, and stripped him of the halo of divinity. Voltaire, a most generous man in personal affairs, a man with a passion to attack injustice, was the embodiment of all the sunshine, gaiety, license and charm of the French character.

Deism had hitherto been a sober draught, for the sober few. It was now champagne. Men clamored for it, in spite of priests and police, all over France. They demanded it in Italy and Spain and Germany and large groups of Voltaireans appeared in every city

of Europe. The ponderous answers of the clergy only aroused, by comparison, further laughter. The only priests and prelates who, like Bishop Talleyrand, could have met rapier with rapier, were themselves skeptics. Voltaire's quips and jokes about religion trickled down amongst the uneducated people. Valets and hostlers shouted them in the streets. Never hitherto in the history of the world had one writer had so mighty an influence. Voltaire was read in the Courts of Lisbon and Madrid, Naples and Vienna, England and Sweden, and not a class of society lay entirely beyond the range of his caustic wit.

Thus was modern skepticism established. The English Deists gave it a solid foundation of learning, as learning then went. Voltaire popularized it, and won the hearts of men for it. Clerics thought that Anti-Christ had appeared and the end of the world was at hand. Skepticism was world-wide. But it was skepticism about revealed religion, not about God, and we must now see how the spirit of criticism passed on to the most fundamental of religious beliefs.

THE BATTLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

At the close of the period of Deism which I have described there occurred one of the greatest events of all history, the French Revolution.

France, economically and politically, was in a scandalous condition. The mass of the people were horribly poor, and they were burdened with the most terrible taxes to support a frivolous Court and a corrupt Church. The result was a blaze of national indignation which lit up the whole world. Naturally, when Napoleon conquered the Revolution, and he in turn was conquered by the English and the Germans, there was a very stern reaction, and, as skepticism was blamed for the Revolution and all its horrors, there was a drastic effort all over Europe to check the growth of skepticism by political coercion and to restore the power of Christianity.

A special chapter will later be devoted to this question of skepticism and the French Revolution. Popular ideas on the subject, especially sermons and religious writings, are entirely wrong. The very common story, for instance, about a prostitute being enthroned as the goddess of Reason in the cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris is untrue. Skepticism had a great deal to do with the best features of the Revolution and nothing to do with the worst. But we must postpone that question. For the moment we have to note only that the check of the revolt against the churches at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a political check, not a spontaneous return to belief. The skeptical movement went on, and it became deeper and more iconoclastic than ever.

Thomas Paine, Rousseau and Voltaire, the three most powerful skeptical writers of the time, were Deists. All three firmly

believed in a personal god, though in the case of Voltaire, perhaps, we can trace an occasional weakening of the belief. But before the Revolution occurred in France there arose a new generation of skeptics who doubted or denied the existence of God. Atheism (or what we now call Agnosticism) and Materialism appeared, and they had brilliant and learned defenders. I am not just now writing the history of this development and so I will merely say that such men as Diderot, Holbach, Condorcet and Helvetius headed the new movement. They were known as "the Philosophers" or (because they chiefly set forth their opinions in the first great encyclopedia) "the Encyclopedists."

At present we want merely to trace in outline the steady growth of the modern revolt against religion, not to study the details of it. We want to understand that it is a normal and vital part of the modern immense extension of knowledge, not a passing fashion or phase. Even a writer like Professor Osborn, a scientific man who ought to know better, has joined with religious writers in representing the revolt as an outcome of the "materialism" of science in the last generation, and has said that this "wave of materialism" is over and we may look forward to a new growth of religion. Such statements are false in every syllable.

The deeper skepticism of the French "Philosophers" (who were not philosophers at all, because philosophy is an abstract science which they despised) was certainly tinged by science. An earlier French mathematician, the famous Descartes, had said that there was no such thing as a soul or vital principle in the animal. Even the body of an ape or an eagle was merely a machine. As one of the witty orthodox ladies of the time said: "According to M. Descartes, you put together a machine called a dog and a machine called a bitch, and you get a little machine called a puppy."

This was the origin of what is now called the mechanical theory or philosophy of life and the universe, or Materialism. The French Encyclopedists said: It is true of man just as well as of the dog. One of them wrote a famous work called "Man a Machine." Descartes had also given the world a theory of the evolution of stars and planets out of cosmic dust (or nebulae, as we now say). He had found the germ of this theory in ancient Greek thinkers, and his own theory was borrowed by Swedenborg (and called a revelation) and was improved by the German philosopher Kant and the great French naturalist Buffon. Such theories seemed to dispense with the idea of a creator of the universe.

Thus science had some influence on the growth of skepticism before the era of the eighteenth century. But this influence was very limited, and few people then took any interest in science. The general skeptical movement in Europe and America was Deistic. It praised the old pagan civilizations and it heavily criticized the Bible. It was a literary and historical movement.

So far it had been generally a superficial movement. It required no great penetration or learning to discover contradictions in the Bible and to ridicule the stories of Noah and Jonah, and so on. Toward the close of the eighteenth century it became more scientific, in the general sense of the word. Biblical criticism became a science, a very careful study and analysis of the Hebrew text. This led at once to the discovery that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is a compilation of fragments of books of very different ages, all put together, and very considerably altered, by the Jewish priests a few centuries before Christ.

This is what is called the Higher Criticism of the Bible. Just as we can easily tell the English of the tenth century from that of the fifteenth or the nineteenth, so we can recognize different centuries in the Hebrew text of the Bible or the Talmud. It is a very solid science, especially when it is joined with the knowledge we now have of the ancient empires. This is one of the very important points overlooked by the Fundamentalists. The authority of the Bible, as they conceive it, goes to pieces without any assistance from evolution. Genesis is the most vulnerable book in the whole Bible, quite apart from what science says.

At the same time history was becoming scientific. The great English historians Hume and Gibbon were giving to the world volumes of history which made all earlier "histories" seem childish. They taught men, almost for the first time, to be critical about the authorities they quoted.

In particular, Gibbon's magnificent work, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," one section of which described the rise of Christianity, had a powerful influence on the spread of skepticism. For the first time the story of man was being written without fables, and it was seen to be a purely natural sequence of events without any supernatural interference. Gibbon himself, who began as a Deist, seems to have ended as an Agnostic. He found no more trace of the finger of God in history than Laplace, the great astronomer, found in the heavens.

History, therefore, was from the start more important as a foundation of skepticism than science was, and it is equally important today. To me science and history are one. What we call "history" is only the continuation of the story of man with which "science" crowns its description of the procession of life through the gloom of the remote past. But the latter part of the story, or history proper, is just as skeptical in its tendency as the former. Why does the anti-evolutionist quarrel with evolution? Mainly because it dispenses with a creator. Exactly in the same way modern history cuts out the miraculous from every page of the human record and depicts the onward march, or stumbling and tottering, of man as a pitilessly human and natural event.

Moreover, this new science of history soon found, in the nine-

teenth century, a most formidable auxiliary. One of the untruthful and unsound effects of the Reformation had been a contempt of all "pagan" nations. The myth began that all the nations lay in darkness and the shadow of death until Christ came on the earth, and this myth got so deeply rooted in the modern mind that even so un-Christian a writer as Mr. H. G. Wells has more or less embodied it in his "Outline of History." We shall see in later chapters that Mr. Wells has been very seriously unjust to the great pagan nations of antiquity.

I call this myth an outcome of the Reformation, though Catholics in recent times use it as freely as Protestants, because it really began, as a universal belief, with Martin Luther and the Reformers. Before that time there had been plenty of Christian scholars who recognized the greatness of ancient Greece and Rome. Dante, in his wonderful Christian epic, actually chooses the pagan poet Virgil as his guide, and, in defiance of his Church, refuses to put the great Romans and Greeks in hell. This reverence for Greece and Rome was naturally exaggerated at the Renaissance, especially in Rome (where many popes were more pagan than Christian), and the Reformers, just as naturally, went to the opposite extreme.

Modern history restores the balance. In one of my debates with Dr. Riley I was astonished to hear that fanatical leader of the Fundamentalists urge that we are no greater today than the Greeks and Romans of two thousand years ago! Where, I asked, is the result of two thousand years of Christian influence? Riley was right, and wrong. By the middle of the nineteenth century Europe had only just climbed once more to the level of ancient Greece and Rome, but since then—while religious influence has sunk—we have passed it.

The great moralists of Greece and Rome were fully vindicated by the new history. It was shown that every fine sentiment in the New Testament has a parallel in the words of Plato or the Stoics. It was another arm for skepticism. The world had been (and still largely is) deceived. But a more picturesque and more effective weapon was next found.

Napoleon's dreams of world-conquest had taken him to Egypt and, in his grand manner, he had taken scholars with him. The English followed the French, stole their finest discoveries—which was considered a quite legitimate piece of enterprise in those pious days—and in turn began to study Egypt. The key to the ancient Egyptian writing was discovered and soon the world was astonished to learn that the old "pagan" kingdom had been profoundly religious and moral. Egypt had even got as far as the worship of one eternal spiritual god before the days of Tut-ankh-amen.

It was next the turn of ancient Babylon, and the revelations made here by the spade of the archaeologist were even more astounding. The world had been completely deceived for two thou-

sand years as to the character of the Babylonians. We found an immense literature and the clue to the language. We found even the Babylonian's code of laws. Babylon a sink of iniquity! Why, we found, they drowned people in the river for adultery and burned men alive for rape.

We recovered the record of their speculations about the origin of the universe and of man, and no man can read them and fail to recognize that Genesis is just a compilation—altered into monotheistic language—of stories which we can trace back for five or six thousand years. The story of creation, of the first human pair, of the garden and the fall, and of the deluge, correspond perfectly with the stories reproduced in Genesis. The world was astonished at this revelation, which was spread over the nineteenth century. Once more a literal faith in Genesis was demolished, quite apart from any conflict with modern geology.

There is hardly any educational need so acute in the United States just now as the spread of this information. Not one single leader of the Fundamentalists has the dimmest notion of what scholars have known for fifty years or more about the Babylonian stories in Genesis. All of them speak about "the Word of God" as if the ruins of ancient Babylon still lay undisturbed in Mesopotamia, and nobody had ever even suggested that the stories of creation, fall and deluge were familiar ancient legends. It would be a revelation to the millions of American Fundamentalists merely to read a literal translation of the tablets which we have found in the ruins of Mesopotamian cities which were destroyed ages before the Hebrews could write.

But, still without referring to what is popularly called "science," we are not yet at the end of the influences which brought about in the nineteenth century the great revolt against religion. The next influence was philosophy. It would be useless here to attempt to describe what philosophy is. Let it suffice to say that it is (or was at first) a study of our very power of thinking and of our most profound reflections on reality. Beginning with Kant in Germany in the second half of the eighteenth century, a long and brilliant line of philosophers, or metaphysicians, succeeded each other in Germany, England, France, Italy and, ultimately, America.

How could these abstruse thinkers influence the popular mind and encourage skepticism? It was quite easy. As the Deistic movement had shaken belief in revelation, there was an intense effort to prove by means of human reason the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. Every theologian, in fact, now recognizes, every reasonable man must recognize, that these things must be proved by the use of reason before we can appeal to revelation at all. We must first know of the existence of the revealer. Well, to cut short a long story, it was the business of the philosophers to study

these "reasons" or "evidences," and the vast majority pronounced them invalid. Faith received another and more terrible blow, for the philosophers are the deepest thinkers of all culture.

Finally, the movement for social reform in the nineteenth century fostered the revolt against religion. Very few people, unfortunately, now know the history of the mighty struggle in the first half of the nineteenth century for the rights of man. In America this is, in a sense, easily understood. The American Constitution was, mainly by Rationalists, inspired with a just sense of human rights, and the industrial conditions in America were better than in Europe. The United States had not to witness the same fearful struggle for justice as Europe. But if any man desires to understand fully the anti-clerical movement of modern times, he must know something about this struggle, and we will tell the story later.

Briefly, when the feudal monarchs of Europe were restored after the fall of Napoleon, the churches were their strongest allies in every country. They formed together what is known in history as the Holy Alliance or the White Terror. Rebels, either against State or Church, were mercilessly punished. Every reform was refused, and the clergy were almost unanimous in the refusal. It was mainly a band of Freethinkers in every country who fought for the rights of man. Until the middle of the nineteenth century not a single well-known clergyman fought with them. The churches were either indifferent or hostile to the most urgent of human reforms—education, industrial betterment, child labor, political rights, the rights of women, prison reform, and so on.

This glaring contrast between the supposed ethic of Christianity and the actual conduct of the churches stung the democracies of Europe, and the intellectual criticism of religion which was contained in the other influences we have described was now reinforced by the passionate appeal of human rights and wrongs. The heart rebelled with the head. From the educated wealthy and middle class the revolt spread to the millions, and the extension of education and cheapening of books completed the revolt of the masses.

ENTER SCIENCE

So far I have hardly said a word about science, as the word is generally understood. It is most important to study the revolt against religion in this way. Evolution, even science in general, is only one element in the revolt. Nothing could be more erroneous than the widespread belief that, if evolution can be excluded from schools, the revolt will be checked and Christianity saved.

In the course of one of our debates Dr. Riley challenged me, "as an honorable man," to tell our audience whether in my conviction evolution led to skepticism. The Fundamentalist leader glowed with triumph when I boldly answered: "Yes," but the glow quickly faded when I added: "So does all knowledge."

Yet it is science that has captured the imagination and become the symbol of the modern conflict of new truth and old tradition. That is easily understood. Science brought such fascinating revelations about the stars and flowers, the rocks and animals, the organs of the body and the atoms of matter, that the whole world listened and applauded. Science proved the truth of its revelations by building upon them such wonderful feats of engineering and chemistry that no one could doubt the soundness of the scientific principles. Science represents the greatest triumph of the human mind ever recorded in history. So when the scientist entered the arena against religion, he attracted far more attention than the historian or the philosopher.

"Yes," the Fundamentalists say, "we admit it. We recognize that *true* science is a mighty power." Well, who is to say when science is "true," and when it is not? When the entire body of scientific experts in the world—more than a hundred thousand—are unanimously agreed that evolution is "true science," who is going to have the courage to say that he knows better?

Scientific men are not agreed about the particular process or mode of evolution. They are not agreed as to the value of *all* the arguments that are used for evolution. But they—all the university professors in the world in seven or eight sciences concerned with evolution—are unanimously agreed that evolution is certain, and they are unanimously agreed that certain lines of argument for it are "true" science.

The dramatic struggle of science and religion began with Charles Darwin's publication of the "Origin of Species." Incidentally, let me point out that the full title of the book, the real definition of "Darwinism," is "The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection." Darwinism is not the same thing as evolution. It is a special theory of the machinery of evolution, and it is disputed. But every writer and preacher who confuses Darwinism and evolution, who represents that they are the same thing, who quotes scientific men opposed to *Darwinism* as if they were opposed to *evolution,* is throwing dust in the eyes of his followers.

Darwin's great merit in science, and his great offense to the churches, is that he first put forward the theory of evolution in a form, and on a basis of fact, that commanded general attention. The theory was well known to scholars before his time, but earlier versions of it had been mere "hypotheses," as a Fundamentalist would say, without any large basis of fact. Darwin, by thirty years of patient labor, provided that basis. The world fell to discussing evolution, and the great conflict opened.

There had, of course, been earlier skirmishes between scientists and theologists. The Bible plainly teaches that man is only a little over six thousand years old. Those who lightly say that the Old Testament does not do this have never added together the ages

assigned to the patriarchs. These figures, added together, take us back to about 4000 B. C. for the creation of Adam, though we may quite admit that the English bishop who gave the very date and hour of the creation was gifted with more imagination than English bishops usually are! In any case, long before the time of Darwin, men of science began to find prehistoric stone weapons, going back certainly tens of thousands of years, and there was a conflict over "the antiquity of man."

There was another struggle or skirmish around the tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues. One of the earliest branches of science in the nineteenth century was the science of languages, philology. Scientists found that the languages of widely different nations—say, most of the Europeans, the Hindus and the Persians —were closely related to each other. In short, long before it was known that species had evolved, it was clear that languages had evolved, and the tower of Babel story was rejected.

There was also a science of comparative religion, which was by no means favorable to the unique distinction claimed by Christianity. There was a science of geology, and long before Darwin's time it rejected the story of the deluge and taught that the crust of the earth had been formed gradually during millions of years. There was, in a word, a good deal of conflict before Darwin's time, but it did not attract anything like the attention that Darwin did, and it did not lead to such fundamental skepticism as philosophy and history did.

The fight over evolution fired the imagination of the world. We must remember that, as I said, the world had been prepared for it by one hundred and fifty years of Rationalism, and that the extension of education, the cheapening of literature, and the greater leisure and higher wages won for the workers in the course of the nineteenth century had created a vast new public. There was a new intellectual curiosity in the race. There were splendid popular exponents of science. There was a readiness to hear the clergy smitten on account of their social record. Huxley in England, Haeckel in Germany, boldly took up the hesitating thesis of the gentle Darwin and applied it to man. The world was in an uproar.

I repeat that there was nothing in all this more damaging to the Bible than the archeological discoveries of Babylonian legends, which are not "mere hypotheses," yet the Fundamentalist seems never to have heard of them. But the implications of the doctrine of evolution were more serious. If man has evolved from a lower form, there is not much room for a soul. If the development of life has been so slow and stumbling and bloody, the mind is disposed to exclude God from it. Huxley, disliking the word Atheism, which is generally supposed to mean a dogmatic denial of the existence of God—and one cannot prove a negative—coined the name "Agnostic": a man who "does not know" if there is a God,

or thinks it not proved. Educated people in all ages had shrunk from the word Atheist. They now quite commonly adopted Agnosticism. Haeckel in Germany coined the word Monist, and millions adopted it.

Meantime evolution spread over the entire universe. As the science of astronomy advanced, it made clearer than ever the truth of evolution of worlds. The science of prehistoric man had thousands of votaries raking the earth in all countries, and soon there was a mass of evidence covering the evolution of man for hundreds of thousands of years. Geology filled up many of the gaps in the record of life. Museums were established in every large town to exhibit these things to the public, and when you wander through the galleries of a large museum, it seems to you ironical to call evolution a "mere theory." It is stamped on every object in the museum.

Sociologists began to work out the evolution of social and political institutions. Experts on the science of comparative religion arranged all the religions of the world, including Christianity, in an evolutionary series. Moral ideas were discovered to be the outcome of evolution, and their origin and development were traced. Everything known to the mind of man, in fact, was proved to be a product of evolution and to be in a state of evolution today.

THE VOICE OF THE HEART

There are said to be about five thousand scientists—that is to say, teachers of science in universities and higher colleges and institutions—in the United States. In view of the threat to exclude evolution from the schools because it disturbs religion, a number of these have signed and issued a public declaration that science is quite consistent with religion. These men are less than a score out of the five thousand. The silence of the others is eloquent, for we may be sure that at least all the more distinguished men of science were asked to sign it.

The Fundamentalist despises this manifesto, and in a sense he is right. What is the good of assuring the Fundamentalist that science is consistent with religion when you mean a totally different religion from *his*? No scientist in the world would admit that science is consistent with a literal belief in Genesis. Yet the document is interesting. It means that Christianity is prepared, or believes that it is prepared, to adjust its teaching to science.

What precise religion these American men of science meant no one knows. Professor Osborn says that he is a Christian, and Professor Pupin even says that he adheres to the Serb Orthodox Church. Does this mean that they accept the miraculous birth, the atoning death, and the resurrection of Christ? They certainly do not.

And what is the use of solemnly assuring people that science is consistent with the *ethics* of Christ? Naturally, science has nothing

to do with it. The Fundamentalist suspects that these men are virtually trying to deceive him; that they really mean that they are Christians only in the ethical sense, but would like people to suppose that they are Christians in a doctrinal sense. I am not sure that the Fundamentalist is wrong.

No one is a Christian because he accepts the ethics of Christ, for this simple reason that, as we shall see, there is no ethic which is peculiar to Christ. But this sketch of the coming of skepticism and the passing of Christianity would not be complete unless we noticed the attempt to adjust Christian doctrine to the new thought. Will this Modernism, as it is called, save Christianity? Is there a possibility of getting the millions back to church by permitting them to read a new sense into the creeds?

We must judge this in the light of all that has preceded. Modernism takes the Bible as an "inspired book" or a "revelation" only in a new meaning of the words. It admits that the early chapters of the Old Testament mainly consist of legends borrowed, directly or indirectly, from the Babylonians. It admits that the supposed history of Deuteronomy, Kings, Judges, etc., is full of errors. The Bible, it says, was not meant to teach science and history. It admits that the Old Testament as we have it was put together and largely helped out with fiction, a few centuries before the birth of Christ. It says that the prophecies were not prophecies, the miracles were not miracles, and it confesses that the New Testament, as we have it, was written so many decades after the death of Christ that an historian would not regard it as a reliable biography.

Now, if you say all this in plain English, as some do, you certainly escape the pressure of many of the anti-Christian influences we have described. But you cannot fool this generation of ours. We want plain English, especially from the men who profess to teach us to be honest. You surrender Adam and Eve, the garden of Eden, the fall, the flood. Very good, but then tell us in plain English what you mean by original sin and the atonement. If all men did not die in Adam, all men were not redeemed by Christ. If the New Testament was written decades after the death of Christ, we have no firm ground for belief in the resurrection.

As we are speculating on the passing of Christianity, let us understand clearly where we are. A few preachers say that they surrender all these things. They have a painful way, when they are called to account for it by bishops and conventions, of retiring behind a smoke-screen of obscure words. That is only a temporary little piece of strategy, they nervously assure us. Diplomacy is the middle stage between feudalism and freedom. Soon we will be quite free to say these things, and Christianity is saved.

Let us look at this Christianity, without hell or heaven, without atonement or resurrection, without virgin birth or miracles, without a divinity of Christ. It is an Ethical Culture Society with

an oil-painting of Christ on the altar and God somewhere in the background.

That looks very like the passing of Christianity. But we will not quibble. There remain a moral code, God and a prophet, and as the prophet is Christ, not Buddha, one may call it Christianity. But are you now on firm ground? I am not thinking of future possibilities on the part of this restless and wicked race of ours. I am thinking of the actual teaching of science, history, sociology and philosophy; of things accepted by the majority of scholars.

Every line, every syllable, of the new Christianity is as much disputed as the old. The ethical code is disputed. To begin with, it is shorn by these Modernists of practically all that seems to be originally and peculiarly Christian: I say "seems," because, as we shall see, even the counsels of turning the other cheek to the smiter, loving your enemies, and giving your goods to the poor, are not peculiarly Christian. The rest plainly has nothing distinctively Christian about it.

Moreover, much of it never has been, and never will be, generally accepted. Up to the present people have pretended to accept the Christian code of sexual sin. It was heresy not to do it lip-service. It is now openly challenged by at least one-half the most influential writers and artists of our time, and it will never again be generally accepted, and every Modernist knows it.

Then there is the prophet, Christ. The doubt spreads in modern literature whether there ever was such a person. I believe that there probably was, but it is just a broad historical conclusion. No one can prove it.

In any case, why should we of the twentieth century listen to Galilean oracles of two thousand years ago? Why should we, who believe that two hundred million years of planetary life lie before us, look for social guidance to a prophet who thought that the end of the world was at hand? That is what our generation asks. The next will not *ask* it; the language will be less polite. A very frail foundation, this, on which to rest the large hope that Christianity will reconquer the world.

The third and chief element of the new Christianity is God, and it is the most disputed and disputable of the three. Pray, do not take this as a piece of dogmatism. I am merely surveying the modern world and setting down on paper its ideas and sentiments, so that we may see what hope even the most liberal Christianity has of surviving in it. God is the most disputed element of all religion. Philosophers, the men who ought to know most about it, are hopelessly divided as to what kind of a God we may believe in and the reasons why we should believe. The majority of them refuse to believe in a personal God.

Moreover, you get right here the full pressure of the facts of science and history.

Note carefully that I do not say, "the full pressure of science and history." It is not the business of either science or history to talk about God. Many scientific men throw as much dust in the eyes of people as Fundamentalist preachers do. "Science is not opposed to religion," they say, pompously. Sometimes they add that it is merely the popularizers and camp-followers of science who say so. But the good men have no more right to talk about religion than the preacher has to talk about science. They have studied religion as little as the preacher has studied science. They have as much right as anybody to say that they are religious, but the fact is not interesting, as they give no evidence of having studied it. When they go on to say that every other thoughtful person is, or ought to be, religious, they are merely impertinent.

When these men say that science is not opposed to religion, they mislead, because all that they, as scientists, can say is that science *as such* does not touch religion, yet they convey the impression that *the facts brought to light by science* are consistent with religious beliefs. On that they have no authority whatever.

We all know that science as such is not concerned with God and immortality. The question for serious people is whether the evolution of life and man (history included), as we know it, is consistent with such beliefs. The great majority of our scientists think not. But it is a question that each person must settle for himself. I say here only that in view of the ghastly, brutal, blundering blood- and tear-stained record of life and man the belief in God is far more controversial than the belief in the virgin birth, and that modern philosophy generally denies the validity of the grounds on which nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of a thousand believe in God.

CHAPTER II

The Origin of Religion

Was Religion Revealed?—Modern Theories of Its Origin—The Real Roots of Religion—How Gods Were Made—The Rise of Priesthoods—The Psychology of Religion

Was Religion Revealed?

SIXTEEN centuries ago there was a simple-minded "Father of the Church," Firmicus Maternus by name, who wrote a book called "The Errors of the Profane Religions." It is the most valuable book that a stupid man ever wrote. Our modern scholars have great difficulty in learning the real doctrines and practices of the religions of the Roman world in the first few centuries of the Christian Era. They were suppressed by law when Christianity was established, and Christian writers, for good reasons, do not tell us much about them. But Firmicus was not a diplomatist. He sat down to write all that he knew about the pagan religions, and we get very valuable information from his pages.

Firmicus was very much disturbed, and, if parts of his book were translated and published, a good many simple Christians would be disturbed. He found that many of these pagan religions of the Roman world had Saviors or Redeemers. He learned that every year the birth of these gods was celebrated, often in mid-winter, and every year, often about the time of our Easter, the death and resurrection of the gods were celebrated. He discovered that in some of these religions bread and wine were used at the altar, and candles and incense and sacred water were part of the ritual.

Poor Firmicus concluded that the devil had revealed or inspired these things to the pagan nations before Christ was born, in order to spoil the success of the Christian Church when it should be founded. "The devil has his Christs!" he exclaimed.

What it all really meant we shall see later. It is part of the study of evolution. Creeds and legends and rituals have evolved just as stars and flowers have evolved. But until this wonderful discovery of evolution was made, about the middle of the nineteenth century, the work of creation was divided between God and the devil. All good things, especially all true religion, came from God. All evil things, especially false beliefs, came from the devil. Man, of

himself, was a poor little manikin, not capable of doing much, either good or evil.

We now have a science of religion, just as we have a science of rocks and atoms, of bodies and of minds. The common idea that science deals with material things and religion with spiritual things is very far astray. One of the best known sciences in America is the science of the mind, psychology. Is the mind a material thing? Then we have a science of esthetics (or of the sense of beauty), a science of ethics (or of the moral sense), a science of sociology, and so on. Science merely means the accurate and critical study of anything that exists. Religion is a fascinating subject for scientific study, and we now have scores of learned experts studying the origin and development of religion.

Religion has had for ages—certainly for tens of thousands of years—so large and commanding a part in the life of man that it is a most fitting subject for a scientific study. What a drama, what an epic, it will seem to the student of a later age if, as I think, humanity is just now outgrowing all religion! Take the savage tribes which put before us today a vivid picture of what all men were a few thousand years ago. Religion dominates and absorbs them even more than sex. All their hopes and fears center round the rude temple and the native priest. Then man became civilized, and of all the great cities that they built little remains today but the ruins of their temples. It is the temples of Egypt, the temple-mounds of Babylonia, the Parthenon of Athens, that we go to see. The cathedrals of the Middle Ages survive in all their splendor, while the homes of those who built them crumbled into dust ages ago. So much men did for the gods, so little for themselves! Now the church is lost in the forest of masonry of our great cities, and tomorrow. . . . Will the idea that has so stupendously filled the heart and life of men for ages pass away forever?

This is far more worth studying than the rhythm of a poet or the bones of a bat. It is particularly important to study it, at the outset of an inquiry into religion, for two reasons. First, most of the writers on the science of religion, or comparative religion, are too timid. They seem always to be apologizing to the world for applying the scientific spirit to so sacred a thing as religion! Please understand, they say at every turn, that we pass no opinion on the truth or value of religious beliefs.

The reader may please himself. I am going to collect such facts as are available to throw light on the origin and early development of religion. But it seems to me ridiculous to say that this has no bearing on the truth of religion. If we discover *why* men first began to believe in a soul, a spirit-world and a hierarchy of gods in the spirit-world, we make a discovery of some practical importance. *For men's beliefs are worth just as much as their reasons for believing.*

But how can we give any positive information about the origin of religion if, as evolution teaches, it arose in the minds of men tens of thousands of years ago? How can we say that religion was not revealed, but grew out of small germs of emotion and speculation in the hazy mind of primitive man?

The religious opponent of science and evolution is apt to be very scornful about what scientific men say because he knows only the conclusions, and not the methods, of the scientist. His amusement is, in any case, very much misplaced. Fundamentalist writers who hold up science to ridicule are really making themselves ridiculous. What? The men who gave us steam and electricity, whose work is the basis of all our wonderful chemistry and textile work, who have measured the universe and doubled the average duration of human life—these men can be made sport of by a handful of pamphleteers and preachers with very poor training and very ordinary mental power? Is it likely? Is it not more likely that they are misunderstood and misrepresented?

The writer of this kind of literature generally replies that he acknowledges all our debt to science on the "material side." There, he says, science deals with *facts*. What he ridicules is the scientific man who deserts facts and piles speculation upon speculation about other than material things—about religion, for instance.

Now when a scientific man tells you that he believes or does not believe in God or Christ, this objection holds good. He is leaving his scientific territory. He knows no more than any intelligent and educated person knows about it. But when he deals with evolution, or the nature of moral law, or the development of religion, he is dealing with facts, and his methods are just the same as when he measures the distance of the sun and planets. He first collects the facts and then interprets them. If science merely collected facts, we should still be waiting for the wonderful chemistry and medicine and surgery, the electric appliances and means of transport and million comforts, of modern times.

The origin of religion is a very good illustration. The first vague religious ideas or feelings entered the mind of man ages ago. Now, things that happened ages ago are apt to leave traces behind them, and we may discover these traces. As everybody knows, prehistoric man has left behind him millions of his flint implements, and these give us the measure of his intelligence. At once you see that it is quite possible to get positive knowledge even of a state of mind of fifty or a hundred thousand years ago.

But we find no trace of religion in all that primitive man has left us. About twenty thousand years ago man began to carve figures, in ivory and stone, and some of these *may* be of a religious character. In any case, they buried their dead, and sometimes put their stone implements and shell ornaments round the body: a

fairly clear proof that they thought that the man had gone to the "happy hunting ground." But this is not the beginning of religion. We must try another way.

Evolution does not in the least mean that every living thing goes on evolving. It is only when their conditions of life change that animals or plants need to change. It is the same with human beings. Put a race of men in an island like Australia, and keep out all higher competitors, and there is no need for them to make progress. There is no stimulation to advance. And from the beginning of its history the human race has been throwing off these side-branches into isolated regions. There they generally remain unprogressive, and we pick them up today, and so learn what the race was like when they fell out of the march—ten, fifty, or a hundred thousand years ago.

This method of obtaining information will be important in more than one of these chapters, and I will illustrate it from the population of America. On the whole, before the Spaniards came, it was a Red Indian (or Amerind) population. But there were exceptions, like the very lowly Yahgans in the island of Tierra del Fuego and certain tribes in the forests of Brazil.

So there were two waves of migration, an earlier and a later, from Asia into America. The Indians, with their superior weapons, pushed the crude earlier population south, or into the forests, just as the arrivals from Europe displaced the Indian. The first invaders were part of the human family of tens of thousands of years ago, to put it very moderately, and they show us what primitive man was like, and how he thought and felt and behaved. The Indians show us man at a much later date. The European shows a still higher stage.

Evolution has thus thrown a light, for the first time, on what we call savage races and their great variety of degrees of culture. We study them all over the world, and we arrange them in the order of their culture and intelligence. As we pass up this order, from the lowest to the highest, we get almost the whole story of the development of man's ideas and institutions. It enables us to study the evolution of moral and religious and political ideas, just as it shows us the development of weapons, from stone to bronze and iron, of art, of clothing, of houses, and so on.

That is how we find a basis of positive fact for a study of the origin of religion. What the savage is thinking today (carefully cutting out what he has learned by contact with the whites), the entire race thought long ago. What the very lowest savages are thinking today, the whole human race thought in its infancy. Let us see what light this throws on the origin of religion. It began in something very different from a revelation.

MODERN THEORIES OF ITS ORIGIN

The method we have described is evidently very promising and interesting. For instance, if you want to know how men shaved before there were safety-razors, how they wrote before they had paper and fountain-pens, how they plowed before the modern steel machines were invented, you follow the same method. You go to backward nations. I have seen Bulgarians plowing with a cow's horn on the end of a pole and (when they *could* write) using a quill pen and ink-horn. So with illuminants and everything else. Then you go to Africa, and find a still earlier level. Next you may go to Australia, where men neither write nor shave nor plow. There you find stone knives and wind-screens instead of houses. But there is a still earlier level in Tierra del Fuego and Ceylon and the Philippines.

In studying the development of religious ideas, you must be very careful that you begin at the lowest human level. Oh, yes, says the critic, I know this "scientific procedure." You look for the tribes with the crudest religious ideas, and you say that these are, of course, the *earliest* level because their ideas are so crude, and then you say that religion began very crudely, because you have found the earliest level!

That is precisely what we do not do. In making my study of the origin of religious ideas, which I have personally investigated and on which I have written a substantial book ("The Growth of Religion," 1918), I consulted one of the leading ethnologists of Europe, my friend Professor Huddon, as to which, on quite *general* grounds, are the lowest human peoples today. The result will be seen later.

But sometimes writers speculate on the origin of religion without following this strict procedure, or without taking care to begin at the lowest level. In consequence of this we have different theories of the origin of religion. Most of these have now only an historical interest, but it will be useful to have a short account of them.

What *is* religion? And what is the exact meaning of the word, "religion"?

It is more difficult to answer these questions than to say how religion arose ages ago. To begin with the word itself, it belongs to the very earliest period of the Latin language, and even the Roman writers of the civilized periods had lost the meaning of it. Very often it is said to come from the word "bind" *(ligare* or *religare)*, and so it is represented as meaning "what binds man to the gods." But in that case the word would be "religation," not "religion," and we must try again. It seems to be connected with the Latin word for "cull" or "select," but what it really meant to the men who first used it we cannot tell.

We know well what we mean today, but the difficulty is that

we do not all mean the same thing. So many people nowadays wish to keep the word "religion," although they do not believe in God, that all kinds of new definitions are current. Professor Leuba gives fifty different definitions in his "Psychological Study of Religion." Mr. H. G. Wells, wanting to write a chapter about me in his "God the Invisible King," wrote me: "What is your religion, McCabe? Or, rather, what is your religiosity? Every man has a religiosity." I replied that *I* had not. It seems to me that the word religion ought to mean always: "The belief in and worship of gods." However, very many people now wish to use the word in much the same sense as "idealism," or reverence for any high ideals.

Here I take the word in its commonly accepted meaning: the belief in God and immortality and the practices inspired by those beliefs. I am glad to be able to agree for once with my Fundamentalist friend! Certainly every reader will know that in its origin and early stages, of which I write, religion was not what the modern refined idealist means.

There were plenty of skeptics, and there were evolutionists, in ancient Greece and Rome, and they seem to have speculated as to how man came to believe in gods. The Roman poet Lucretius, perhaps, gives us their general sentiment when he says: "Fear was the first thing on earth to make gods." He seems to have imagined the prehistoric savage cowering before the crash of thunder, the roar of the storm, the blaze of the volcano, the chaos of an angry sea, and even the fierceness of the crocodile or the tiger.

In the nineteenth century, when evolution again became a living thought, many speculations were published about the origin of religion. Much discussed at one time was a theory of the great expert on languages, Max Müller, that religion was due to a sort of "disease" or decay of language. The early Hindus, he said, talked much in their poetry of the sun and moon, of fire and water, and so on. They regarded them merely as elements of nature, but later Hindus misunderstood the meaning of their fathers. They took these conspicuous elements of nature to be deities and worshiped them. This theory rests on too narrow a basis and is not now followed by any man.

Next Herbert Spencer, the great evolutionary philosopher, published a theory of the origin of religion. It began, he said, with a belief that a man's shade survived the death of the body, and, as the chief remains a chief or ruler even in the world of shades, famous chiefs came to be honored, flattered, and appeased as gods. Grant Allen, in his work, "The Evolution of the Idea of God," follows much the same theory, and he quotes a very large amount of material from the life of African tribes to prove it.

But before Grant Allen took up the theory, it had been generally displaced by a new theory conceived by one of the most famous anthropologists, Sir E. B. Tylor ("Primitive Culture,"

1877). This theory is known as Animism. Just as stars are only gradually formed out of loose, diffused cosmic dust, or "fire-mist," so, Tylor thought, the belief in definite spiritual persons, souls and gods, must have been preceded by a vaguer and more nebulous belief. Nature generally must have been supposed by primitive man to have an animating spirit. This vague general animation was in the course of time gathered into separate and definite personalities: the gods and goddesses of sky and sun and moon, of fire and water, the spirits of the trees, the fountains, the animals, and so on.

More recent writers think that Tylor's general Animism was not the first stage. There was, they say, a vaguer and earlier stage which they call Pre-Animism. The germ of religious belief was man's awe in presence of the mighty and mysterious movements surrounding him in nature. He did not at first personify these forces, and did not even think of a general animation of nature, or world-soul (as Dr. Brinton supposes in his "Religions of Primitive Peoples"). It was just an emotional attitude or reaction, without reasoning.

The best books presenting this theory of religion, which is widely held, are, perhaps, R. R. Morett's "Threshold of Religion" and Professor J. T. Shotwell's "Religious Revolution of Today." The feeling of the Melanesian natives seems to correspond with this theory, and is much quoted in support of it. Irving King ("The Development of Religion") points out that the American Indians had a corresponding feeling, and he supports the theory from that side.

This is the general trend of speculation on the origin of religion, though there are various separate theories. The phallic theory, that it arose out of sex emotions, will be considered in a later chapter. Dr. L. R. Farnell, a distinguished authority on the science, thinks that primitive man's horror of bloodshed and death led on to religion ("Evolution of Religion"). M. E. Crawley, another authority, thinks that it sprang rather from man's general attitude toward life ("The Tree of Life"). Others start from early Greek religion, and think "mother earth" the first to inspire religious feeling. Some, in fine, like Professor Leuba, one of the leading American experts on religion, think that there were many different roots of religion, not one, and combine all the theories ("The Psychological Study of Religion").

Those who wish can read the works I have quoted, but I would wish to make one or two general reflections on these theories. Some readers will at once exclaim: "Ah, the usual thing! Scientific guesses succeeding and annihilating each other every decade."

Now, the answer to this common remark is, as a rule, that successive scientific theories do not annihilate, but correct, complete and expand each other. The first theory is too broad or too narrow. We find new facts and correct it. In any case, the remark is really

foolish. Because theories which were advanced fifty years ago, when our knowledge was still very imperfect, have had to be abandoned, it is absurd to say that the theories formed at the present time when our knowledge of facts is ten times as great, are just as likely to be superseded.

And at first it looks as if we have here only a normal case of the evolution of a theory. Max Müller's theory was never widely received. It was just a first guess, nearly a century ago. Spencer's theory, as far as it goes, is sound. But Tylor traced, or thought he traced, an earlier psychological stage in the evolution of ghosts and gods, and the Pre-Animists only profess to find a still earlier stage. The theory is successively enlarged or built up.

But I am going to try to show that Spencer was, on the whole, right, and that the Animistic and Pre-Animistic stages did not precede the belief in a definite soul or double. Speculation on this subject is difficult and dangerous. The modern scholar has to try to put himself in the mental attitude of the savage: to see how the savage mind would react upon the daily experiences of savage life. He cannot do it. He imagines fine shades of psychological development which are modern rather than primitive.

The best way is to go to the lowest savages and learn what they actually think and feel about religion. But one has to be very careful to begin at the beginning: to start from the lowest level of mental life, the lowest savage type, that is known to us. This is very rarely done. In the days of Herbert Spencer it could not be done, as our knowledge of lower peoples was still very imperfect, and the arrangement of them according to their culture and development was far from satisfactory. Grant Allen builds almost entirely on the religious ideas of the Bantu tribes of Africa, and they are very far from being at the lowest level of humanity. More recent students start from the Melanesians (of New Guinea, etc.), and we are still not at the lowest level. Others build much on the Australian aboriginals, and here again we are not at the lowest level.

This is, I think, the defect in the theory of one of the greatest living writers on comparative religion, Sir J. G. Frazer ("The Golden Bough"). He thinks that magic preceded religion. Men tried at first to coerce the powers or elements of nature by magical practices. When they became intelligent enough to see that they failed, they imagined personal powers behind the vegetation and the storm, and began to worship and placate them. A high French authority, Solomon Reinach, thinks that the use of *tabu* was a stage earlier than magic.

With all respect for these distinguished authorities I feel that they have speculated too much and have taken their facts from tribes which do not show the lowest level of human development. When my book, which does thus begin from the lowest human

level, appeared a few years ago, an expert wrote that we know too little about the obscure peoples I chose to be able to reason from their sentiments. That is untrue. We shall see that in most cases we have volumes on them by scholars of high repute, and no scholar questions that they are the lowest fragments of humanity. It will, surely, be of interest to see what religion, if any, they have.

THE REAL ROOTS OF RELIGION

Where should we look for the lowest fragments of the human family?

Remember what we mean today by the human family. Savages are not degenerated peoples. Here and there, in particularly hard conditions, a tribe may have degenerated somewhat, but their language or some other part of their life contains traces of the higher level from which they sank. The overwhelming majority show no such traces, on any scientific test. They are fragments of the race, regiments of the human army, flung off, and left to stagnate, as the race advanced. With each fresh advance of the other races, they were driven further afield. Men with better weapons and better brains pushed them aside and seized their lands. You look for them in sheltered islands, sheltered forests, and at the tips of continents.

That is where we find them. They are the Yahgans of Tierra del Fuego, the Botocudos of Brazil, the Veddahs of Ceylon, the Andamanese Islanders, the Aetas of the Philippine Islands, the Semaons of the Malay Peninsula, the Tasmanians, and the Bushmen of South Africa. These are admitted to be the lowest human peoples. They are not tribes; they have no tribal organization or chiefs. Most of them cannot count beyond one, or make fire. In all their culture and their physique they are the lowest human beings. I have in my work, "The Growth of Religion," summarized all that the authorities, whose works are given, say about them. Here I must very briefly quote what we know about their religion.

First let us take America. The continent was peopled by an invasion from Asia, across a land bridge which formerly existed in Alaska. But a few peoples are so far below the Indian level that it is imagined by some that they crossed from Europe by a land bridge which, we know, once spanned the North Atlantic. It is, however, so many hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of years since this land bridge broke down that it is safer to trace all the inhabitants of America to Asia. The primitive very early race, of which we find patches today in Ceylon, the Andaman Islands, the Malay Archipelago, and the Philippines, seems to have sent a branch over to America before the great Ice Age blocked the Alaskan bridge. The later and higher Indian invaders, after the Ice Age, drove them right south, and the remnants of them shudder today (and die out) on the bleak shores of Tierra del Fuego or wander in the dense forests of Brazil.

In Tierra del Fuego there are three peoples. It is the lowly Yahgans who interest us. They seem to have degenerated in many respects, but there is no trace of any degeneration from a higher religious level. Fortunately, they were thoroughly studied for two years (1882 and '83) by two able French scientists long before modern ideas could reach them, and these men, Hyades and Deniker, say: "We have never detected the least allusion to any kind of cult or religious idea." They quote a missionary, T. Bridges, who had, before them, spent twenty years amongst the Yahgans. He says:

> They have neither hope nor fear beyond the grave. For them there is neither God, nor good, nor evil, nor spirits to fear apart from the phantoms which may injure them in this world. Death is the end of existence, and they have no idea of a spiritual life or of the composition of man from a body and a soul.

Here let us pause for a moment to point the bearing on another issue of religious controversy. It is constantly said that no tribe ever lived without a belief in God. Even Professor Leuba strangely says, in his "Psychological Study of Religion," that this is correct. It is very far from correct.

I do not see, in any case, what consolation a Christian can derive from the assurance that the very lowest of savages share his belief in God. It might, perhaps, be urged that this universal belief points to either a primitive revelation or an "instinct" in human nature. If the latter view be urged, we may say that an instinct which is so strong in the savage and so feeble in modern civilized man is scarcely entitled to respect. And if it be held rather that the universality of belief points to a primitive revelation, we can only regret that the revelation did not contain also a warning that worship should be kept free from bloodshed, human sacrifices, and all the monstrosities of savage religion.

In point of fact, it is false that all nations or peoples believe in God. I have just quoted a most experienced and devoted missionary saying that the Yahgans had no religious belief whatever, and missionaries never err on the side of Rationalism! We shall see that not one of the peoples described in this chapter believe in any kind of God, and even higher peoples, whom we shall describe later, have no God or gods. The human race does not begin with Monotheism, or a revelation, and degenerate from it. On every strict test of facts, it begins without religion, then believes in spirits of the dead, next in Polytheism, and finally in Monotheism.

But in the quotation about the Yahgans there is a reference to "phantoms which may injure them in this world," and it may be thought that here we have a rudimentary religion. Hyades and Deniker also say that they found certain ideas that might be referred to superstition, though their origin was the fear of maleficent individuals. The Yahgans attributed disease and death to certain "wild men of the woods." Some of the Yahgans had seen these horrible monsters, who sometimes stole their children and often

descended upon them during the night. But there is here no religion. Hyades and Deniker say in the end: "The Fuegians commonly believe that these wild men are the Alakolups." And the Alakolups are simply a neighboring people of higher culture. In short, the Yahgans have little magic and no religion. They have never speculated on dreams, shadows, or powers of nature. Such was primitive man.

Next we turn to the Botocudos and other lowly tribes of Central Brazil. These, naturally, are less isolated (from other tribes) than the Yahgans, and they have borrowed much and are at a higher level. Yet Dr. A. H. Keane, a distinguished authority, who studied the Botocudos, and tells us that they cannot count beyond one, says that they merely regard the sun as a good principle (but do not worship it), and the moon as a maleficent agent, and the storm as full of evil spirits. Beyond that they have no religion. Other writers on them say, curtly, that they have no religion. It depends on how you define religion.

Other primitive tribes of Brazil were carefully studied by Professor K. von den Steinen. He found them great dreamers. They stupefy themselves with tobacco leaves in order to get vivid dreams. We are therefore not surprised to find that they are quite convinced that man has a double which leaves his body in the dream and, at death, fails to return to it. As the professor says, when they bury a woman's implements with her, and say that she will need them "in heaven," they clearly betray the influence of missionaries. They worship nothing. In their legends they talk of two very powerful "ancestors," and even credit them with the creation of fire and water. But when we learn that these myths are common in America, we must gather that they borrowed them from the Indians.

In a word, they have no gods and no religious practices, but they have a firm belief in an invisible double of the body. This is closely connected with dreams, but—note this particularly—their native name for it is "shadow."

In the beautiful island of Ceylon, not far from the cradle of the human race, there lingered until recent years another of these patches of primitive humanity, the Veddahs. Naturally, the island long ago attracted higher tribes, and most of the Veddahs have adopted Tamil or Cingalese ideas and practices. There are, however, and were until quite recently, a few "wild Veddahs," and these have been thoroughly studied by two scientific men, Paul and Fritz Sarasin.

Their general culture is of the simplest known description—they cannot count beyond one—and their brains are, relatively to their size, the smallest amongst living peoples. We are at the primitive level of humanity.

They have no religion, and only the slightest trace of anything

that we could call magic, and not the least belief in an impersonal force in nature. They thus, like nearly all the peoples I describe in this chapter, do not fit either Frazer's theory or the Pre-Animistic theory of the origin of religion. At the most they have some awe of the sun and the moon, but it has no religious significance. They speak of a dead man as a *Yaka*, and the Sarasin brothers translate this "soul." But it is, they admit, a Cingalese word, and the Veddahs, who offer rice to the *Yaka*, say that they in this merely imitate the Cingalese. To the question whether the dead lived on, they replied that they did not know; they had never even reflected on the matter.

There is a second important study of the Veddahs, by Dr. and Mrs. Seligmann, but it deals with the Veddahs as a whole, and it is acknowledged that they have adopted the Tamil religion. The pure Veddahs, now almost extinct, have no religion whatever; not even a belief that man has a double which survives the body.

Equally primitive, both in culture and language and brain, were the aboriginals of Tasmania, who died out half a century ago. Here again we have a people not far removed from the very cradle of the human race, which was probably in southern Asia. They at first occupied Australia, but the present Australian aboriginals drove them to the extreme southeast. This part was then cut off by the sea, and became the island of Tasmania, and behind its ocean-sheltered frontiers they retained the primitive features of the early human race until the nineteenth century. They had no abstract ideas or words, and their language was, in fact, so rudimentary, and had so much to be assisted by gesture, that they could hardly talk to each other in the dark.

Fortunately we have again here the testimony of a missionary of long experience, Dr. Nixon, the first bishop of Tasmania. He says:

> No trace can be found of any religious usage, or even sentiment, among them; unless indeed we may call by that name the dread of a malignant and destructive spirit which seems to have been their predominant, if not their only, feeling on the subject.

The bishop, as later and more careful writers like Bonwick and Ling Roth show, is quite right in saying that they have no gods and no kind of worship. But they have plenty of religion, of an elementary sort, in their belief in "malignant and destructive spirits," and it is most important for our purpose.

The Tasmanians believe very strongly both in magic and in spirits: neither belief seems to precede the other. The spirits of the dead, moreover, were malevolent, and were greatly dreaded and never mentioned. It is clear that, before the first traveler described them, they had vaguely adopted ideas from missionaries, as they said that they became white men after death. They had never seen a white man until the eighteenth century. It is, however, enough

for us that they were convinced that man had a double which survived the body, and their native name for this element was "shadow." Beyond this they had only a certain feeling of awe for the sun and the moon, which they did not worship.

Returning to the Indian Ocean, the probable cradle of the human race, we pick up another fragment of early humanity in the Andaman Islanders. Their ideas and practices, however, are very largely adulterated with foreign elements, for their islands lie in the track of seafaring peoples, and their religion contains such obviously borrowed beliefs as creation, Eden, and a deluge. It is thus impossible to tell how far they have been influenced by others in their legend of a "great spirit," Puluga, who lives in a stone house in the sky, with wife and family. At all events, they have no nature-worship, and no belief in an impersonal force, but they intensely believe in the spirits of the dead. Since the "soul" is red, one may conclude that they got the idea of it from the colored double or reflection of themselves which they saw on the surface of water.

The Semaons of the Malay Peninsula are another dwindling fragment of the same primitive race: a race of small-statured black men (negritoes) scattered in patches along the Asiatic coast and in Tasmania and South Africa. The Semaons, however, have admittedly adopted many ideas from the Malays. They have "a kind of deities called Kari and Ple," and occasionally they offer human sacrifices to Kari. In this, and in their magical practices and legends, we cannot possibly disentangle native from adopted ideas. It is enough that they believe intensely in the surviving spirits of men, and that the spirit is a *small red object* which, after the death of the body, lives on in the water or the storm.

In the Philippine Islands—the race, you see, spreads toward America, and gives us the clue to the Botocudos and Yahgans—are a few thousand additional primitive negritoes called the Aetas. Most travelers say that they have no religion; but they build fires to the full moon (not praying to it, so that Professor Brinton is not justified in calling it their "chief deity"). It is not clear even that they believe in spirits of the dead. The only suggestion of such a belief is in connection with their head-hunting; but they have most probably adopted this practice from the Malay head-hunters with whom they have for ages been in contact.

Lastly, we have the Bushmen of South Africa. These are what we may call the highest stratum of the primitive human level, and they have for ages been so closely associated with higher tribes, and for a century with Boers and missionaries, that it is difficult to get at their really native beliefs. They are often quoted as believing in a supreme spirit, 'Kaang, who created all things, but the chief authority on them, Dr. G. McCall Theal, tells us that 'Kaang was not a god, and that they do not even clearly believe in a spirit which survives the body. He says:

> Everything connected with their religion—that is, their dread of something outside of and more powerful than themselves—was vague and uncertain. They could give no explanations whatever about it, and they did not all hold the same opinions on the subject. Some of them spoke indeed of a powerful being termed 'Kaang or Cagu, but when questioned about him, their replies showed that they held him to be a man like themselves, though possessing charms of great power. Many are supposed to have had a vague belief in immortality . . . but probably very few of them ever gave a thought to such matter.*

When we compare the statements of the other authorities, we come to the conclusion that they vaguely believe in the survival of some part of a man, for which they have no definite name, and they have very rich legends about ancestors, one of whom, 'Kaang, is well on the way to become, in their memory, a sort of god, though there is as yet no clear reason to call him a god, and there is no worship.

HOW GODS WERE MADE

An ounce of fact is worth a ton of argument, and there is, perhaps, no subject in connection with which it is more useful to remember this proverbial advice than the origin of religion.

I have now put before the reader a collection of facts of the greatest importance and instructiveness. These facts are given us by men of the highest authority, men who personally and scientifically studied the peoples in question. There is, moreover, no dispute about the position of these peoples. They are the lowest fragments of the living human family. I have not space here to describe their life, their ideas, and their physique in detail, though a good deal of this is given in one of my books, but on every test these lowly peoples are marked off from the rest of humanity as an earlier and lower stratum. They are surviving fragments, not of the *earliest* human family, by any means, but of a race far lower than the Australian black: a race corresponding to man of the early Stone Age, the man of more than a hundred thousand years ago. From the cradle of the race they wandered along the lines we have indicated, and higher tribes have driven them into the islands and forests.

They afford us a fascinating glimpse of early man just at the time when he was becoming religious. They show us religion in the making. There is no trace of primitive revelation or of a religious instinct. There is no trace of Animism or Pre-Animism, and magic seems amongst them to develop equally with, not to precede, their rudimentary religion.

What do they teach us? First, that there is originally no belief in a god. It is only amongst the higher of these lowly peoples or those who have been most in contact with higher tribes, that any sort of being stands out as particularly powerful, like 'Kaang or

**Yellow and Dark-Skinned People of Africa*, 1910, p. 50.

Puluga. It is a stage, perhaps, in the making of a god, but there is nothing like worship. He is a strong man about whom they tell stories, as Britons once did about "King Arthur," or the Hebrews about Samson, or the Babylonians about Gilgamesh.

Some of these peoples cannot be said to have any religion at all, but they are all on the threshold of it. And it makes its first appearance as a belief that a part of man survives the death and decay of the body. I defined religion as a belief in a worship of gods. In that sense none of these primitive peoples have any religion, but I would here extend the meaning of the word to include a belief in spirits. The first religious idea, not preceded by any sort of speculation about the animation of nature or awe of the powers of nature, is a belief in what we today call soul or spirit.

Before I made this investigation into the beliefs of the lowest peoples, I considered that it was probably the sun and moon, the fire and the storm, that first impressed the imagination of early man and begot a religious feeling. It is clear that this is not so. Before man got wit enough to speculate on the cause of movements in nature, he believed in his own soul.

Then we get important clues as to the origin of this belief in a soul. Let us be careful, in using the words soul and spirit and immortality, to remember that these dull-brained humans had no ideas corresponding to ours. The part of a man that survived death was material, though generally (after death) invisible. Whether it lived forever . . . They never ask the question. They reply vaguely to it. All that they know is that it lives on.

And we get a very clear idea why they suppose that there is a part of a man that lives on. Their word for it is commonly "shadow," or it is a "little red thing," like a man's shadow on water. Of the nine peoples I have described, three plainly have no idea of survival, two are very doubtful, four (the higher in culture) have an intense belief in it. Of the four who do definitely believe in survival, two call the surviving part of a man "shadow," and the other two say that it is a red object, though I cannot find the translation of their name for it. We shall see that even at higher levels tribes still give the name "shadow" to the soul.

So it appears that there is more meaning than we thought in the phrase "shades of our ancestors"! I do not wish to press any particular theory of the origin as an exclusive and universal fact, but these lowly peoples very clearly suggest that religion began with a crude speculation of primitive man about his own shadow.

And this seems to me quite the most probable course which the mind of early man would take. Sex-life does not count in the earliest form of religion. Primitive man takes sex as a fact, like food. We leave the phallic theory to a later stage. On the other hand, nature worship, or the animation of nature, is not one of the earliest stages. Some of these peoples are said to have an "awe"

of the sun and moon. This is certainly a germ of a religious feeling, but religion as a belief in personal human spirits or doubles clearly comes first.

If we try to put ourselves in the mental atmosphere of a very lowly savage, we can understand it. He is incapable of abstract ideas. His mind is thoroughly concrete. A vague general animation of nature is quite beyond him. He does not speculate on causes of movements. But definite concrete things begin to prick his curiosity. The sun and moon are too conspicuous, too solitary in the sky, too striking in their daily movements across it, to be ignored. He begins to have a feeling of wonder about them, though not a definite opinion or speculation. But his own shadow is so near to him hourly, so weird in its movements, so plainly a double of himself, that it would be likely enough to be the first thing in nature he speculated about.

Primitive man at this level had not the slightest idea of the sun's share in the matter. No sun, no shadow, of course; but he had only to look into a pool or river to see it again, an exact duplicate of himself. It drew back into himself, spread out from himself, went with him everywhere. He must really be two beings: a body and a shadow. This gave him a clue to death. The shadow-part had gone away.

But it seems likely that dreams intervened here. While he slept on the ground, some part of him was out in the forest or on the river: the shadow-part. We saw that the Brazilians who believed most intensely in spirits were great dreamers; though their word for the soul was "shadow." The shadow-part wandered at night. When a man was found dead, his shadow-part had not returned to the body. It still wandered, especially at night, when everybody's shadow wandered. The world of the savage became peopled with shadows. So many men died.

There is not much "religion" in this. The lowest peoples, we saw, had no such belief. To the next group survival was simply a fact. They did not bother about the shadows. But in the next group we find a belief that the shadows are malignant. Amongst the lowest peoples few are malignant. As we shall see in studying the evolution of morals (in Chapter vi), the lowest peoples have no idea of a *moral* law, but they have very few vices. They live socially. Character gets worse as they rise in culture—we shall see why—and the violent crimes multiply. So violent and malignant shades multiply. You must look out during the night.

Now this is all that we find at the lowest level of humanity, when we set aside borrowed ideas and practices. It is the beginning, the germ, of religion. It was fortunate for us that so many primitive patches of the race survived into our age of scientific curiosity. Before the end of this century they will all probably be extinct, like the Tasmanians and the pure Veddahs.

From this level upward we can still trace the evolution of religion by means of the savages who remain in the infancy of the race. But the tribes are now more numerous, the culture is more varied, and it would require a large volume or series of volumes to tell the story even in outline. All that I propose to do is to explain, by means of a few peoples at different levels, how men came to believe in gods, to have priests and temples, to practice worship and sacrifice. And we will first take the evolution of gods.

But what *is* a god? We have already seen how in the mind of primitive man certain shadowy figures rise to a high or predominant position. The Veddahs and others have no spirits, so there is no question of a god. Others, like the Tasmanians, have spirits, but nothing that stands out and could by any stretch of imagination be called a god. On the other hand, the Bushmen have 'Kaang, the Andamanese have Puluga and a second "power," and the Semangs have Kari and Ple.

We must not attach too much importance to these. 'Kaang is to the Bushmen a great man of long ago. They never worship him. Puluga and his companion power are said by one student of the Andamanese to be merely the monsoons, and Kari and Ple seem to be borrowed from the Malays. The truth is that these lowly peoples have, as I said, no tribal organization and no chiefs. The spirits of the dead were equal as the living are.

The clue to the evolution of gods is, in other words, the rise of man to tribal organizations under chiefs. When men become hunters and fighters, the strong or cunning man gets chosen as leader. He becomes a chief. The leadership becomes hereditary. And, as the spirit-world is a duplicate of the living world, there are more powerful spirits in the world beyond the grave. Famous ancestors or former members of the tribe rise in the memory above all the ordinary spirits, who are individually forgotten. They are on the way to become gods. But it is a very gradual process, with all sorts of shades of belief, all degrees of *godness*, so to say.

So far Herbert Spencer and Grant Allen seem to be right. Gods are at first deified (glorified) chiefs or ancestors. But we must not suppose that religion evolved in precisely the same way everywhere. The glorification or deification of the sun and moon and other elements of nature was proceeding at the same time. It seems, however, that men got a definite belief in human spirits, some of which towered above others, before they imagined corresponding spirits in nature. The "awe" they sometimes show of the powers in nature, the sun, the moon, and the storm, is not far removed from the feeling you can sometimes deduce from the expression of a dog watching a storm or a lion shrinking from fire. It is a very long way from this to the speculation that the visible storm or fire must have an invisible cause. The definite belief in spirits has to come first.

The proper way to trace the successive stages in the evolution of religion would be to arrange savage tribes in the order of their culture or general development, and then see how religion rises from level to level. Most writers on comparative religion, instead of doing this, quote one tribe after another without noticing to which level of culture each belongs. The result is contradictory and confusing, and theories are wrong. Naturally, no one will expect to find in a short chapter such as this an attempt at such systematic work. But we will glance at a few peoples which are at the next level of culture to those we described earlier in this chapter.

The Australian aboriginals are at the next level of culture above the one we have described. They entered Australia ages ago. I should say, certainly fifty thousand years ago, at least; for they correspond to man of the Old Stone Age in Europe, yet in some respects they rise above him. In any case, it is not disputed that they represent the next stage in man's evolution, and they are, therefore, most interesting from our present point of view. Many of them have for a century been in contact with the whites, but competent Australian scholars have studied them in their purest forms and given us valuable accounts of them.

Of these accounts Spencer and Gillen's "Northern Tribes of Central Australia," and "Native Tribes of Central Australia" are the most authoritative, and the authors tell us that the aboriginals, who have no number above three, have "no belief in anything like a supreme being." Howitt, the other chief authority, says that, if by religion we mean worship of a god, the Australians have "no religion." On the other hand, C. Streklow, who also knows them well, asserts that some tribes have a sort of supreme being. As the Australians are always quoted, on one side or the other, when the question is raised whether all peoples, even the lowest, believed in God, it would seem that we have here a perplexing contradiction.

But—apart from the fact that the Australians are by no means amongst the lowest savages—it is a verbal quarrel. Streklow says that the tribe he studied described their "great being" as a huge red-haired man with very large feet. Is that a deity? Some tribes talk of this being—he has various names—as having "made" the world, but here we clearly get the ideas borrowed from missionaries. On the other hand, the tribes generally believe that there was an earlier age when their ancestors were beings of marvelous power and could make a river or a range of mountains; just as the Bushman thinks some of his marvelous ancestors could make sun and moon by throwing their shoes into the sky.

In a word, all the Australians believe firmly in a spirit-part in man and in the reincarnation, or successive embodiment, of this undying part. They believe in magic with the same intensity, and we have no reason to suppose that one preceded the other. They

believe further that some of their ancestors were remarkably powerful beings, and that they remain powerful in the spirit world. They never pray to, or supplicate, or worship these beings, and they have no moral code presided over by them. The great ancestors, now great spirits, are simply facts. They have no priests and no temples; but there are hiding places for their ceremonial objects which we might regard as the germ of temples. In fact, some tribes pick out one amongst the ancestral spirits—Bungil, Baiamè, Altjirà, etc.—as a very special and powerful spirit. There is no sort of nature-worship or Animism.

All this quite confirms the idea of the origin and development of religion and gods which I have given. Now, at this higher level, there is no uncertainty whatever about a man's spirit-part. The race has got beyond that. Now, also, since the peoples are organized in tribes, and the tribes have chiefs, there are chiefs or headmen in the spirit world. It is no longer a complete democracy. In fine, in some tribes one particularly powerful spirit is named above all others. It is not a god; but it is not far from it.

Another black race is found on the islands north and east of Australia, and these "Melanesians" are on a higher stage than the Australians, though lower than most of the Africans. Their word for a man's spirit-part is related to the word for "shadow," and we may assume that their belief arose in the way described. They are, however, still vague about the future life, and, though they put the dead man's weapons in his grave, they deny that this means a belief that his spirit will use them. Some of the tribes believe definitely in punishment in a future life, and it warns us again not to read our "spiritual" ideas into the savage mind when we learn that the punishment was administered on the part on which old-fashioned schoolmasters used to punish boys!

There are still no gods, but, as in Australia, there are approaches to a divine condition. In many of the islands particularly powerful spirits are venerated, and in cases it is said that they are the spirits of former human beings, sometimes chiefs. Sacrifices are offered to them, their help is invoked, and little houses built over their supposed remains represent the germ of temples.

At this point something in the nature of priests, though not formal priesthoods, appear. The wizard or the chief has to offer the propitiatory sacrifices, and he gains a quasi-sacred character.

The Melanesians are especially interesting because they believe in a kind of impersonal supernatural influence diffused through nature which they call *mana*. A good knife, a shark, a curious stone, or a tree may have *mana*. A man wants it—one almost thinks of the American "pep"—and believes he gets it by eating a strong man. Now, we saw that one of the current theories of the origin of religion is that it began in a vague belief in some such vague force or virtue in nature generally, and those who hold the

theory illustrate it from the Melanesian *mana*. But the Melanesians are very far from primitive. Their ideas entirely confirm the line of evolution which I suggested.

The Polynesians of the Pacific Islands are a very much higher race, and are believed to be related to the Europeans. Their word for "soul" is not "shadow," but, when a man dies a violent death, they spread a white cloth on the ground, and the first ant that crosses it is said to be the man's shadow. It is buried with him. Here again the idea of soul becomes connected, in an ancient practice, with shadow.

But the next level above the Melanesian is that of the African black, or of the Sudanese Negroes in particular, and here we get striking confirmation of our theory. Gods are now common, and it is equally common to find that they are regarded as the spirits of glorified ancestors. One of the most noted writers amongst the early missionaries, D. Macdonald, said: "The spirits of the dead are the gods of the living," and the anthropologist Dr. A. H. Keane tells us that this formula "applies equally to the Sudanese natives of Upper Guinea, and to the Bantu populations of Uganda, the eastern coast-land and Damaraland."

There is, however, one more point to be considered. We have covered a very great deal of the evolution of religion without mentioning the deification of sun and moon and the powers of nature. What about the solar cult or solar myth theory of religion?

Well, we must be guided by the facts. When I first began to speculate on the origin of religion, it seemed to me certain that man would first deify, or ascribe powerful spirits to, such conspicuous bodies as the sun and moon, the storm and the fire. I now believe that all this is based on a false psychology. Primitive man was too unintelligent to speculate on causes. He began with a concrete fact, his shadow. This was not an inference, but a thing he saw. He consisted, obviously, of two parts. As his mind grew, he got the idea of a spirit-part, and later, when he began to speculate on the life of nature, he put spirits into it to explain its energies and movements.

The facts we have narrated prove this. It is only above the Melanesian level that we begin to get nature-gods. We begin to find them among the Bataks of Sumatra and the Papuans, who are Melanesians with a tincture of higher culture. The growth is more pronounced amongst the African Negroes, though even here the nature-deities are of much less importance than the deified ancestors. They are very far away, and they have not the same dangerous interest in the life of men. The higher the tribe, the greater the nature-gods become. On the whole, even in Africa sun-gods and earth-goddesses are secondary. Amongst the American Indians and

others the nature-gods were much more important, but here we are dealing with a higher level, a later stage of religious evolution.

THE RISE OF PRIESTHOODS

We saw that Sir J. G. Frazer, one of the most influential writers on religion, regards it as derived from magic, or the failure of magic. It is sometimes put that magic, in the earlier ages of man, was the religion of the individual, and that, as social evolution proceeded, religion became the magic of the social group. There seem to be two errors in this. First, magic, we saw, did not precede religion. It develops at the same time and in the same proportion. Secondly, religion, the facts have shown us, grew out of individual experiences, not out of social influence.

But we have now reached a human level at which the growth of social life does react on the evolution of religion. Social life always means the division of labor, the increase of experts and middle-men. Moreover, with the rise of agriculture (which is unknown to the lowly people we first studied) the course of nature becomes a matter of grave anxiety. Will the rain fall in due season? Will the spirits of the trees and the corn bring forth their usual abundance?

Disease, also, is now thought to be due to spirits. In fact, since spirits are everywhere—in the shark and crocodile as well as the clouds and trees—a man has a frightful lot of potential friends and enemies to concern himself about. He wants experts, or particularly gifted people. So medicine-men, rain-makers, wizards and priests arise.

We see the appearance of these middle-men as a quite natural development when we ascend from lower to higher tribes. The Australians have no priests, but, of course, the women and children are, as weaker vessels (not on grounds of sex), excluded from the important ceremonies, and it is the elders particularly who handle the tawdry mysteries of the tribes.

Amongst the Melanesians, the next level, we find experts appearing. There is no professional caste, but a man can acquire or buy the art of making the sacrifices and placating the spirits, and he becomes a sort of wizard or priest, living on his art. Amongst the much higher Polynesians there are definite priests. They enter into communion with the gods—which is proved by convulsions and contortions—they induce the god to speak to the worshiper (by putting out of sight an assistant to play the part of the god), they demand presents in the name of the god. Priestcraft is as old as priesthood.

The natives of the Slave Coast are a little further evolved, and they illustrate the further development of religion. The little spirits become of less importance. The greater spirits occupy the attention of the Negroes more and more. The really greatest spirit, Mawu,

the god of sky and rain, is still not dreaded. He is a sort of good-natured father in heaven. The god of lightning is much more important; for much damage is done by lightning in the region. So his priests and priestesses (who are "wives of the god") rise in importance. When a man's hut has been destroyed by lightning, these priests or priestesses come along and examine the ruin. Secretly —they are all expert conjurers—they slip a flint arrow into the heap, and they then produce it to the wondering natives as a proof that the catastrophe was an "act of god."

Then there is a phallic deity: and we must note that this is about the level where the phallic element enters religion. The natives delight in erotic dreams, and the priests keep them on good terms with the god of love. The sex-organ is carved everywhere.

Beyond these major spirits are the usual legions of spirits of dreaded animals, of fire and river, forest and harvest, disease and child-birth, and so on. What interests us most is that some spirits are rising out of the primitive crowd to the position of something like gods, and Mr. Ellis tells us that this is not a natural development, but has been "brought about by the priesthood." The ambitions and rivalries of different bodies of priests are beginning to make gods. *Their* spirit, each group says, is the really great spirit, the one that really matters. We must be careful not to suppose that the deifying of a great ancestor, or the veneration of a great element of nature, was the one way of making gods.

We see the rise from a crowd of spirits to a few outstanding spirits which, under the fostering influences of the priests, became what we may call gods. We see the nature-gods gradually, but slowly, rising to importance above deified ancestors. We see rude huts over chief's remains or fetishes growing into carved temples. We see priesthoods gaining in power, wealth and organization. We see the departed spirits gradually acquiring a home, at first in the forest or beyond the hills or in some other vague place, then underground, then with the great spirits in the sky. We see, in fine, a strong tendency everywhere for one great spirit, and it is very commonly the sky-god, to predominate. The whole story of man's religious evolution lies before us, not in a dead and speculative chronicle, but in living remnants of the various ages through which the race has passed. Science is not "a series of guesses." It is a careful interpretation of carefully observed facts.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

There is no psychology of religion; that is to say, there are a million different psychologies of religion. The religious psychology of the Tasmanian is not that of the Australian, and it differs again as we rise to the African, the Polynesian, the Amerind, the Mongolian or the European peasant. The religious psychology of the Minneapolis lady, with her tremendous puritanism and social zeal,

has not the least relation to that of the Madrid lady, who thinks that the Church exists mainly to forgive indiscretions, or of the south Italian or Bulgar or Greek girl who permits unnatural vice without a blush and crosses herself in the presence of a Protestant. The religious psychology of a man is not that of a woman, and there is even no such thing as a general religious psychology of the same sex in the same sect or congregation.

It is a very large subject. All that we can do here is to seek if there are any common features at all in the frame of mind which we call religious.

It is very difficult to find any such common features. And a reverence for the unknown? Well, the Spiritualist is religious, but the objects of his religion—he does not necessarily believe in God —do not inspire awe and reverence, and he would not admit that they are unknown. Probably the mass of Roman Catholics, the illiterate Mexicans and Peruvians, the Italian and Spanish peasants, etc., so rarely feel awe and reverence that we cannot regard it as essential. It is at all events a very small element in what they call their religious life. It is a small and occasional element in the lives of the great majority of religious people. Ask *them* what religion is, and they will answer: correct belief, occasional attendance at church, and a graceful recognition (in theory) of the moral obligations of Christianity.

Religion is not an emotional reaction on the universe or on powers which seem to be manifested through it. Scholars say this; and religious people don't know what they mean. Are Buddhism (as taught by Buddha) and Confucianism religions? They are generally described as such. But Buddha and Confucius were Agnostics, as we shall see, and Confucianism at least has been faithful to its founder. Was Stoicism, which was one of the greatest of moral systems, a religion? But the Stoic was completely indifferent to gods or to anything except the life of man here and now.

The facts give no indication whatever of a religious instinct, an inner sense or urge, or whatever new name one invented. From beginning to end it is a question "of drawing wrong inferences from observed facts"—the shadow, the dream, the nightmare, disease, death, the movements of wind and river, the rain, the sun and moon, the annual birth and death of vegetation. The only urge—beyond the subtle urge of priesthoods—is the curiosity of man. He itches to explain things. From beginning to end religion is an explanation or interpretation of obscure and dark things.

CHAPTER III

A Few of the World's Great Religions

The Religions of Egypt and Babylon—The Chinese Religions and Confucius—Buddha and the Religions of India

The Religions of Egypt and Babylon

WHAT chiefly surprises the man who wanders through the Egyptian gallery of a museum or opens an illustrated book on Egypt, is the great number of divinities, especially animal-headed divinities. How could so great a nation retain such monstrous deities? But we must remember that in historic Egypt it was only the ignorant majority who took these old deities seriously; just as in the modern Christian world the deity of the cultivated is not the deity of the people. We must remember, too, that each of these old cow-headed goddesses or jackal-headed gods had a powerful priesthood. It was the priests who fought for the gods.

In the beginning it is quite intelligible, if we bear in mind that material and political conditions have as much influence on religion as on anything else. Egypt is a unique country. It is a very long and very narrow valley. The result of this was that each section of the valley had its own tribe, and it took ages for one kingdom to spread over the whole. These tribes had come into Egypt from different quarters, and each had its own god or gods. We saw that religion began with a belief in spirits everywhere in nature, but especially in curious or powerful objects in nature. So different tribes saw divinity in the sun, the moon, the hawk, the cow, the bull, the crocodile, the ape, the ram, and so on. When they settled down, wars with their neighbors occurred, and the greatest bitterness arose from the rivalry of their gods. The cult of each was hardened and grew powerful.

But even before the historic period there were great nature-gods which were represented only in human form. Osiris (probably a sun-god originally), Ra (another sun-god), Isis (possibly at first a fertility-goddess), Horus (later a Savior-god), Neith (probably the fertility-goddess of another tribe), and so on. When Egypt was organized, the priests arranged these deities as man and wife, mother and son, and so on, and thus more or less organized religion. But the priests constantly intrigued, and at times one or another deity became the supreme god. And fourteen hundred years

before Christ, King Amen-hotep IV instituted a pure spiritual Monotheism as the one religion of Egypt. But we have a special chapter on Egyptian religion and morals, with full details. Here we need only indicate their place in the general evolution of religion.

In the case of Babylon also, where our discoveries about the morals and religion of the people have been very remarkable, we shall require a special chapter to give even a summary of the facts. A few words about the religious development will suffice here to make this general sketch complete.

The kingdom of Babylon was founded about four thousand years ago, and it had been preceded by a thousand years of city-states, very largely ruled by priests, in different parts of the Mesopotamian plain. How all this came about we shall have more space to tell later, and I will merely say here that two different races, the Sumerians (possibly akin to the early Chinese) and the Semites (a race like the Hebrews) mingled in the cities and more or less adjusted their gods to each other.

There were no animal-gods, such as the material conditions had developed in Egypt. The spirits in the minor departments of nature (common to all religions at first) remained mere spirits, and, as priesthoods of the greater gods developed, they turned these into "devils." The Babylonian believed as firmly as the less educated modern Christian does that the world is full of legions of devils.

But long before the historic period began the gods in the greater elements of nature were the only objects of worship. As I said, two entirely different peoples coöperated in making the civilization of Babylonia, and this meant a double series of nature-gods. The Sumerians had Snu (sky-god), Ea (earth-god), Sin (moon-god), Nusku (fire-god), and so on. Then there were Shamash (another sun-god), Marduk (a third sun-god), Ishtar (of love and war), Tammuz (ancient fertility-god), and others.

The story of Babylonian religion, after all the city-states were welded together in the kingdom of Babylon, is a story of rivalries and ambitions of priesthoods, resulting in the temporary supremacy of one or other god. When the city of Babylon rose to supremacy, its particular god Marduk also rose to supremacy. Later Shamash became "the one true god." There were several spells of Monotheism.

THE CHINESE RELIGIONS AND CONFUCIUS

There are some reasons for thinking that the early culture of the Chinese was imported from the west of Asia. The founders show some points of contact with the founders of Babylonian civilization. However that may be, we find civilization appearing there,

not twenty thousand years ago, as the Chinese annals claim, but about 2700 B. C.

The earlier religion is, no doubt, illustrated in the beliefs and practices of some of the simpler Mongolian tribes which linger at a low stage of culture round or within the frontiers of China. In my work ("The Growth of Religion"), to which I may refer any reader for further details about religions, I have carefully examined the religious beliefs of the Chukchi, the Yukaghirs, the Karyaks, and the Ainu, and from a comparison of their views we may gather the early religious ideas of Mongolians generally.

It is a very interesting phase of the evolution of religion, exactly on the lines we suggested in Chapter ii. Nature is full of spirits. Every tree, forest, river, lake, etc., has what the Chukchi call its "master," or indwelling spirit. Every animal has a spirit. Of the disembodied spirits of men there are whole legions of sour and malevolent shades haunting the villages and living in the deserts, so that we have a very large belief in "devils" (so prominent in the Chinese religion). They work terrible havoc among men, and there is quite an army of *shamans* (devil-fighters, magic-practicers) to keep them at bay.

But already amongst these Mongolian tribes we find that some spirits, especially those in the greater elements of nature, rise high above the common level, and, in fact, one or other of them reaches a level not far removed from Monotheism. The Chukchi have a supreme spirit, a sky-god, whom they regard as a "life-giving being" or even "creator," though they do not pray to or worship him. The chief spirit of the Yukaghirs and the Karyaks is also a sky-god, and there is a naïve belief that if the animal-sacrifices to him are neglected, he goes to sleep and the course of nature is disordered. Other Mongolian tribes have no particularly outstanding spirit, but there is a general vague respect for "heaven" (the sky-spirit) and the "will of heaven."

In the sixth century before Christ, when the Chinese kingdom had fallen into decay and confusion, two sages arose. These were Lao-tse and Kong-fu-tse (commonly called Confucius). They were both what we call Agnostics, and the immense influence they had shows that educated China reached the proper stage for Agnosticism twenty-five hundred years ago.

I have in another book quoted the two greatest authorities, Sir R. K. Douglas and the Rev. Dr. Legge, showing that even Lao-tse "knew nothing of a personal god," though the moral system he founded, Taoism (*Tao* is the Chinese for "way" of life), was later mixed with ritualistic Buddhism, and is now a tissue of superstitions.

About the Agnosticism of Kong-fu-tse there has never been any question. Dr. Legge says that his moral system is "hardly more than a pure secularism." It is no more. No one in the world dis-

putes that, when Kong was pressed to declare his opinion on a religion, which he never mentioned, he said: "To give oneself earnestly to the duties due to men, and, while respecting spiritual beings, to keep aloof from them—that may be called wisdom." Two thousand five hundred years ago this great sage founded an Agnostic code of morality as high as any in the world, and it has had a finer influence than any. For two thousand years it has been the standard of Chinese gentlemen, and it has never taken a religious form.

The culture of Japan is so largely borrowed from China that little need be said about it here. The popular religion, Shintoism, corresponds to the Chinese Taoism, and, like China, the country has a ritualistic Buddhism. Shintoism is said by the people to have eight million gods. In other words, it is the old Mongolian nature- and spirit-worship.

Confucianism was, like Buddhism, brought over from China, and it has been for ages the sole moral standard of every educated Japanese. As in China, it has remained purely Agnostic, and, whatever may be thought about Japanese character since European and American influence began, every writer on the Japanese before that time gives them an exceptionally high level of character. It is sometimes said that they have a sacred book called "Bushido," but this is merely a collection of moral sentiments culled from any source whatever, even the Bible. In 1871 the Japanese officials and middle class, themselves indifferent to or contemptuous of all religion, sent a deputation to Europe to study Christianity and see if it was a suitable religion for the ignorant masses. Never was there a more impartial judgment on Europe's religion, and the emphatic verdict was that popular Buddhism was more desirable than Christianity.

BUDDHA AND THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA

There are said to be as many religions as tongues amongst the vast swarms of peoples of different races and cultures, which we call India. They range from the simple cult of pastoral hill tribes like the Todas to the fanatical worship of Siva, the advanced ideas of the more learned of the Hindus, and the elaborate creed and ritual of the Mohammedans. Every stage in the evolution of religions is found somewhere on the teeming plains or the isolated hills. Every error into which a mythical heaven ever led the steps of man lives in India today, and in Ceylon, to the south of it, there are, as we saw, men without any religion.

The country is probably the oldest inhabited part of the globe, since it is somewhere in its neighborhood that the human race was born or cradled. But our interest in it begins when the ancestors of the Hindus of today descended the slopes of the northwestern mountains and settled amongst the more primitive inhabitants.

The ancient literature of the Hindus, written in Sanskrit, enabled scholars to learn long ago that they were related to the

peoples of Europe, and more closely related to the Persians. We have in recent times found proof of this. We have the terms of a treaty, drawn up more than thirty-three hundred years ago, in which the names of Hindu and Persian divinities occur as those of a still united people. Soon after that time the Hindu branch separated from the Persian, and there must have been a great trek across the deserts and hills of Asia until at last the warriors gazed upon the sunny and fertile plains of Hindustan.

We know their religion from their sacred books, the Vedas. But these were written ages afterwards and, like the Hebrew and other sacred books, they falsify the real development and adorn the primitive life and thought of the rude pastoral invaders with the more advanced ideas of a later age. Still, our scholars have succeeded in obtaining a satisfactory picture of the early religion, which was a local variation of the general religion of the "Aryans," or the common fathers of the Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Slavs, Teutons and Celts.

There survive, however, in India today a large number of tribes who belong to the population ("Dravidian," scholars call it) of India before the "Aryans" arrived. Nearly ten million of these still cling to Animism, or nature-worship, in the shelter of the hills and valleys. The Todas, for instance, believe vaguely in wandering spirits of the hill, the river, and the pool, and in a small number of greater spirits which can hardly be dignified with the name of gods. The Khasis are substantially at the same level. In brief, these relics of the early population show us the phase of belief in universal spirits and the beginning of the creation of major spirits and gods.

The invaders brought with them a nature-religion (as opposed to the more primitive belief in universal small spirits), of a kind with which we are now familiar. The Hindu early sacred books, the Vedas, did not begin to appear in writing until about 1000 B. C., and the later religious ideas are confused with the earlier, but the original religion is fairly clear. It is the worship of great spirits or gods who control and dwell in the more important elements of nature. They fall into three main groups: gods of the sky, gods of the air, and gods of the earth.

Some scholars have, as in the case of China, claimed that the early religion was Monotheism. This indicates a very curious change of attitude on the part of religious writers. A generation ago Monotheism was supposed to be beyond the range of the unaided human mind: it had to be revealed to the Hebrews. Now that we know that it arose frequently before the Hebrews were civilized, there is a tendency to look for it, and distort the evidence in favor of it, in many quarters.

And the particular Hindu god chosen by the Christian authority, Sir M. Monier-Williams, as "the one god" is interesting for

another reason. It is Dyaus ("the sky") or Dyaus-Pitar ("Sky-Father," like Zeus and Jupiter). It is clear that this was, as in Mongolia generally, the great god at a very early date in nature-worship. From Europe to the coast of China the "Heavenly Father" is the outstanding god, but "heaven" is the physical heavens, or the sky, and we thus have nearly half the race testifying to the "solar myth" theory of religion.

From the start, however, Dyaus is in Vedic religion accompanied by a legion of gods and goddesses. The sun-god, under many names (Swrya, Deva, Vishnu, etc.) early displaces the sky-god in importance. His mother is Ushas (the Dawn), later represented as a maid. There is a sky-rain god, later the god of water (Varuna). There are, in the air, Vata (wind-god), Inara (or rain and lightning), and others, and on the earth are Agni (of fire), Prithivi (mother-earth), and many others. We need not give the whole list. The early Hindus, a branch of one of the higher races of three thousand years ago, had risen above the primitive level to the deification of the great elements of nature.

Seven centuries before Christ the priests of the Hindu religion, which was now elaborately organized, and had great temples and ritual, entered upon a phase of speculation or metaphysics, of a crude nature (though ladies pay five or ten dollars to hear it rehashed in Chicago and Los Angeles today). The supreme principle now became a deified abstraction of a quite unintelligible nature—all description of it is mere verbiage—called by them Brahma, while the priests called themselves Brahmans. The modern development of this Brahmanism, one of the weirdest word-weaving systems of the world, is the religion of the educated Hindus today (when they are not Agnostics or Mohammedans), and it is the commodity sold at a high profit in American markets as "the wisdom of the east."

The mass of the people of India were incapable of understanding, and had not the slightest wish to understand, this new development. Their religion was, as it is today, a mixture of the primitive belief in minor spirits with a worship of the very congenial and amorous Hindu gods. But the crudities of the popular religion and the empty wordiness of the Brahmans had a remarkable reaction amongst the educated. India was, like China in the days of Kong-fu-tse, in a state of decay and confusion, and a number of reformers arose.

Jainism, which still has a million followers, was one of the new sects or "reforms" started at this period. It is now a fanatical superstitious sect, priding itself that it is a refinement of Hinduism, but its founder, who still lived in the time of Buddha (sixth century B. C.) rejected all gods and all speculations about them. He retained, however, the doctrine of reincarnation, the germ of many superstitions. Sikhism is in turn a reform of Jainism.

Another group which arose in India about the same time as Jainism and Buddhism seems to have had no mystic features whatever. Like Epicureanism in Greece and Rome at a later date, it was rather a frame of mind than a system. It rejected gods and religious speculations, and concentrated upon happiness in this life. One might call it ordinary common-sense Agnosticism.

And this, in a far different way, was the simple aim of one who is almost always described as one of the "religious geniuses" of the race and the founder of one of the greatest religions. Buddha ("the Enlightened") or Gautama (his real name) was the son of a chief or small prince, born about 560 B. C. His life does not concern us. Briefly, he renounced his position, became a wandering teacher of the proper way to live, and gathered disciples about him. But, instead of founding a religion, he precisely aimed at diverting men from everything that was then called, and most men still call, religion.

Like Kong-fu-tse, Buddha distrusted and rejected all speculation about gods. His complete silence about gods—was there ever a great religious teacher who never mentioned God, yet believed in him?—and his advice to his disciples to avoid all such speculation, are universally admitted. But many writers naturally shrink from admitting that one of the greatest "religious" founders was an Atheist or Agnostic: that one of the most lofty ethical systems was purely humanitarian. Yet the significance of his silence in such an age is plain enough.

Buddha was, like Kong-fu-tse, a purely humanitarian and Agnostic moralist. Professor Macdonell (professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University), one of the latest and highest authorities, says that Buddha "denied the existence both of a world-soul and an individual soul" (Hastings' "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics," article "Indian Buddhism"). Professor Rhys Davids, perhaps the highest authority, agrees, and draws the conclusion that Buddha was an Atheist. Some writers say that Buddha continued to believe in reincarnation, one of the mischievous superstitions which the Brahmans had put into circulation. It is disputed by others, and for the life of me I cannot understand how Professor Macdonell makes Buddha deny the existence of a soul yet believe in reincarnation! A vast amount of nonsense has been written about Buddhism in the interest of religion.

Buddha's doctrine was purely humanitarian. Professor Macdonell says that its essence is "that all earthly existence is suffering, the only means of release from which is renunciation and eternal death." But he gives us another and more attractive side of the ascetic teaching of Buddha when he says that it was "rather a religion of humanity" (if one can admit such a thing), and "a

system of practical morality, the key-note of which is universal charity, kindness to all beings, animals as well as men." The asceticism and pessimism of Buddha are explained by the terrible confusion and disorder of his age, the immaturity of the mind of the race. But his doctrine of universal human love, five centuries before Christ, is the highest note of ethics, and his rejection of all religion now explains to the reader what may have startled him at first—my statement that all educated Asia reached the final goal of religious evolution, Agnosticism, two thousand years before Europe. Buddhism unfortunately degenerated, and it now has few followers in India proper.

CHAPTER IV

The Myth of Immortality

The Law of Death—Evolution and the Soul—Is the Mind a Spirit?—What Is Personality?—Modern Theories of Immortality—The Freedom of the Will

The Law of Death

IN Chapter II, "The Origin of Religion," I defined religion as the belief in and worship of gods. If there is any error in that definition, it is that it ignores the belief in immortality. That man's mind survives the body is, in fact, as we saw, the oldest of all religious beliefs, the germ of all religious thought. Gods were but the princes of the spirit-world. God is its monarch. What if the spirit-world became, like the human world of which it is a fantastic imitation, a republic without aristocracy or princes? Could we have religion without God?

One would expect men to cling more desperately to the belief in immortality than to the belief in God, yet in that universal decay of religion which I have described there is as much indifference to the disappearance of the one as of the other dogma. Did men ever profoundly believe in their immortality?

The logic of theology is nowhere more inexorable than in this section. If we are to live three score years and ten on earth, and an eternity in some other sphere, it matters vitally how we prepare for that larger life. And the majority of men have always behaved as if they did not entirely believe the story. The flesh, and its impulses and pleasures they knew, but that dim far-away crown. . . .

Yet at a time when even the dimmest vision of the crown seems to fade, when the rumor spreads that heaven is an illusion, one would think that the most earnest efforts would be made to save the hope. No. Few but professional theologians concern themselves with it. Hardly one in ten of our more learned men now believes in personal immortality, and the news passes from ear to ear. And not a tear falls: not the thinnest shade clouds the unconquerable gaiety of modern life. The angelic harp is the butt of our comedians. Hell is the text of humorous stories.

And the official reply to all this is remarkably feeble. Every man who believes in God has one or another reason for doing so always present in his mind. God must have made the world, or at

least the order and beauty of the world, or must have laid down the moral law. But ask your religious neighbor why he believes that he is immortal. The answer will be a series of gasping exclamations: "Why-er, surely-er." And so on. I venture to say that not one believer in a thousand has in his mind one single definite reason for thinking that he is immortal.

Most people will candidly reply that they believe because the Bible says so, or the Church says so. Since the Church can say so only on the authority of the Bible, we are reduced to that. And to accept such authority with any confidence in the truth of your belief, you must first be quite convinced, by solid proof, that there is a God to make the promise, and that He actually did inspire the Bible. In the next chapter, "The Futility of Belief in God," I show how frail is the belief in the very existence of God, and another chapter shows that the claim of revelation in the Bible (whether there is a God or not) is far frailer.

It is strange how people forget that religion is a series of statements of fact, and the boldest and most tremendous statements imaginable. Perhaps the reader will be surprised to know that it is profoundly difficult—many thinkers say impossible—to prove the existence of the material world; of your body and the house you live in. Religion makes the far more formidable statement that there is a Power beyond and greater than the world. But in claiming that man is immortal it makes an even more astounding statement, and one for which we require very clear and cogent proofs.

Death is the law of the universe. In the days when Plato worked out the first rational arguments for immortality, as distinct from mere religious tradition, the claim was not so exorbitant. The stars themselves, the Greeks thought, were immortal. They were small, undying fires set in the firmament. Plants and animals died, of course, but these stars made men familiar with things which never died.

Now we know that the stars—not three thousand of them, as the Greeks thought, but two billion—are born and grow and die just like dogs, except that their life is immeasurably longer. There is a time when each is a shapeless cloud of star-dust. There will be a time when the most brilliant star in the heavens will fade from the eyes of whatever mortals there may then be. They are made of the same material as our bodies: of gas and earth and metal. They fall under the great cosmic law that things which come together shall in the end go asunder—shall die.

A hundred years ago a few religious men of science, trying to help theologians to reconstruct belief, said that, while stars were certainly not immortal, the atoms of matter of which they were composed never changed and never died. An atom of carbon or of oxygen, they said, is an article "manufactured" (or created) once for all. There is no dissolution for it.

They were wrong, as everybody now knows. Atoms are composed of tinier particles called electrons. They break up into these electrons. In the hottest stars very few of our atoms are as yet formed. And now astronomers tell us that the stars may entirely burn themselves out, so to say, and leave not an atom behind. Matter may change into "energy." I would not here press my own opinion, but I believe that it will eventually be found that matter is evolved out of ether and in the star much of it may return to ether. The electrons, I think, are centers in ether and may dissolve into it.

In that case, you may say, ether is immortal. Probably it is. As I say in Chapter v, "The Futility of Belief in God," men of science now generally regard the universe as eternal, and it is only the ultimate and fundamental material of it, the ether, which shows no beginning and no end. That does not help the belief in human immortality, however. Man is the most complex thing in the universe, and the law of death is that all *complex* things return sooner or later into their elements. It is a law of universal dissolution.

If I cared to indulge my imagination, to let my pen weave pretty patterns of words, as Theosophists, Hindu mystics, preachers, and poets do, I could make out a good case for this law of death. Nature, one might say, thus gives a chance to countless myriads of things to enjoy their hour of life. The stuff which made a star of a quadrillion years ago now shines in Arcturus or Aldebaran. The matter of which the brontosaurs and cycads were compacted in the earth's Middle Ages is now molded into horses and palms. We humans have our chance because the living things of long ago died and left the matter of their bodies to be used in new forms.

But it is precisely the aim of this book to put readers on their guard against such verbiage. Let us reason only with facts. The law of the universe is death. The day dies, as I write this, and will never return. Spiritualist prattle about the immortal souls of cows and cats is too frivolous to be considered here. The law is death.

You say that you are an exception to this universal law. Your body will dissolve into its elements, but *you* claim to be immortal. Your "soul," you say, is not compacted of different elements, and will not be dissolved into elements.

I am quite prepared to consider it; only, reflect, you must now give stronger proofs than were ever required before. "Why," you may ask, "must I? Why should I give any proofs at all?" There was a brilliant American (ultimately British) novelist, Henry James, who believed in personal immortality, and he one day told the world why he believed. "Because I choose to," he said. He knew that he could not prove it.

Possibly many people believe because they choose to, and, since

this book is concerned with supposed proofs of religious statements, let us have a word on this point.

When you say that you believe because you choose to, what do you mean by "believe?" The usual meaning is to accept a statement as true. But to accept a statement as true without proof is impossible, unless you take it on the authority of others. All that you can mean is that you will go on repeating the statement because you like to. It may be a pretty statement. It may soothe your mind. You may be indifferent as to whether it is true or not. But it is psychologically impossible for you to believe it to be true without proof or authority, and I am not concerned with people who repeat creeds and care not whether their statements be true or false.

So we are concerned here only with the proofs of the statements they make. The law of the entire universe is death, and you state that one single being in it, man, one amongst myriads of living things on a single globe out of myriads of globes, is a grand exception to the law. I ask proof in proportion to the magnitude of the claim.

But, you will say—and this is the nearest approach to an argument that most people could offer—man is so obviously different from everything else in the universe that the claim really has a plausible ground. Man builds cities, writes poems, measures the universe. Does any other creature in the world even remotely approach him in his powers and his nature?

There is certainly one human power which is remarkable and convenient: the power of generalizing. Remember that in reality there is no such thing as "man." There are only men. Now which man do you mean? I presume that *you* do not build cities, write poems, or measure the universe. A few men do these things. But—

But, you say, there is a perfect gradation of power from me to these intellectual aristocrats of the race. It is only a question of degree. I have the same nature as they.

Yes, quite true, and it cuts both ways. The sodden, stupid brute in the gutter has the same nature as you. The laborer, so low in intelligence that he cannot even understand what other men discover, has the same nature. The Negro in the forests of the Congo has the same nature. The wild Veddah in the forests of Ceylon has the same nature. Are they so mightily different from the other forms of life?

In fact, not so long ago there were no men who could write poems or measure the universe. Consider the whole race as it was a hundred thousand years ago, and we know it well. Men could not even make homes of the rudest description. They had not begun to scratch the outline of an elephant on a bone or a stone. The utmost that any man could do was to chip a piece of flint a little better than his neighbor.

And this is by no means the lowest level of humanity that is

known to us. On the contrary, man was then already some millions of years old. We can trace him to half a million years ago. There is no savage in the world so low as the entire race then was. Suppose some glimmer of the philosophic spirit had then arisen in the dull brain of one of these early prehistoric humans. Suppose he had announced to his fellows that they were so vastly superior to all the rest of the living world that they must be immortal. I fancy that these squat, hairy, beetle-browed predecessors of ours would have smiled their first smile.

You see the fallacy. A few men can do wonderful things, and we naturally claim the credit for "man": which includes ourselves. But even we, though most of us are not very obviously spiritual and immortal beings, are certainly evolved from a lower type, which looked still less spiritual and immortal. From this we go back to a still earlier type of man, so brutal and animal-like that the claim of a spiritual and immortal nature really begins to be grotesque. And, finally, we go back even beyond this type and we see the most primitive semblance of humanity merging into the "lower animal" type from which, you say, we are so glaringly different that you can claim for man the unique privilege of deathlessness.

In other words, the one reason which most people have in their minds for claiming immortality is quite unsound. The ordinary and unanimous teaching of modern science has, I will not say undermined, but annihilated it.

EVOLUTION AND THE SOUL

Scientific men—the few scientific men—who assure you that there is no conflict between science and religion mean between *their* science and *their* religion—not yours. And these men generally know as little as the general public does about those branches of science which chiefly concern us when we talk of such a conflict. Professor Pupin, for instance, is a mathematician, and we agree that mathematics does not conflict with theology. Professor Millikan is a physicist, and physics also has no point of contact with religion. They both speak in the name of sciences which they do not know. Sir Oliver Lodge, a physicist, is in the same position.

The case of Professor Osborn, the self-constituted loud speaker of American science, is different. He says that he is a Christian, though not a Christian in the meaning of any Christian Church, of course. Creation of Adam, Eden, Fall, Deluge, Atonement for original sin—he pooh-poohs the lot of them. What exactly he does believe he is too discreet to say. But, after all, religion is generally understood to include a belief in the immortality of the soul, and, when Professor Osborn, who is an authority on the evolution of man, assures the world that there is no conflict between the statements of science and the statements of the Christian religion, we

will assume that he is not ignoring the one branch for which he is entitled to speak.

Let us see. It is the settled and unanimous teaching of many branches of science—anatomy, physiology, psychology, archaeology, anthropology—that man was evolved from a common ancestor with the apes. I am not going to prove this here. This book is for serious people: not for men who imagine that Mr. Bryan or Dr. Riley, or Dr. Straton, or Dr. William A. Sunday, to say nothing of the average Fundamentalist preacher, really knows better, on a point of science, than all the experts in the world. That is a humorous, not a serious, attitude. Science most decidedly teaches, without a single dissenting voice today, officially, that man, body and mind, was evolved.

My point is that on the accepted and unanimous teaching of science man took several million years to evolve from the ape to the ape-man stage. He then took a few hundred thousand years to evolve from the ape-man to the savage-man stage.

A child could see the bearing of this on the belief that man has a spiritual and immortal soul. The ape has no such spiritual principle. Then at what stage in this long and gradual evolution was an immortal soul infused into the developing body? Do you think the Java ape-man had an immortal soul? If so, can you suggest any reason whatever why this transcendent mental principle of his took three or four hundred thousand years to raise the race to the level of the Australian black?

Let us see where we are, then. Evolution has brought us from the common ancestor of ape and man to the ape-like human of a quarter of a million years ago, and I know no one who seriously wonders if these men of a quarter of a million years ago really had an immortal soul. The Fundamentalist attitude is to deny the facts. That sounds easy, when you do not know the evidence, though personally I have never elicited from any Fundamentalist spokesman any plausible reason why all the experts in the world should be wrong and he right.

From this human level of a quarter of a million years ago to the Beethovens and Shakespeares of the race the gradual evolution is so well known that I do not see how anyone can find a stage in which he would claim the infusion of an immortal soul: a soul which never knew its own existence until, long afterwards, it began to speculate childishly on the shadow of the body or its reflection in water.

By this time man had begun to chip flints and give them a rough cutting edge. The first thing he learned to do, when he became intelligent enough, was to brain his neighbor. Anyhow, these stone implements reflect the intelligence of early man as faithfully as if he kept a diary through the ages. And the gradual rise of them during a quarter of a million years is portentously slow

and never shows a sudden advance. We should surely expect so tremendous an event as the infusion of an immortal soul to break the monotonously slow advance somewhere and give us an appreciable rise!

There is no such thing. Those stone implements, representing several hundred thousand years of human life—we have millions of them—put the gradual evolution of the human mind beyond question. Alfred Russel Wallace was the last man of science to question it, and he had no knowledge of prehistoric science, and merely acted in the interest of his spiritualist beliefs. Amongst the experts on the subject the evolution of the human mind was settled thirty years ago.

But I am forgetting a rather consoling piece of news which Professor Osborn gives the believer. Many years ago we found certain human bones at Cro-Magnon in France, and the skulls were remarkably large. The brain of these representatives of some lost race of about twenty thousand years ago was larger than that of the average European of today! They were a race of geniuses, says the Professor. If you could put their sons beside yours on the benches at Columbia or Chicago University, they would take all the prizes. And so on.

Well, this sounds promising. Does Professor Osborn draw the conclusion that here a spiritual and immortal soul was infused into man? He does not go so far. For a good Christian he is singularly shy of creations. He merely says that this is a case of "emergent evolution." What, you ask, is that? and I can only reply that it is a pretty phrase coined by another religious scientist, Principal Lloyd Morgan.

Seriously, we need not go into this emergent evolution because Professor Osborn does not understand the simple facts about this "Cro-Magnon race." He does not seem to know that they were exceptionally tall men, more than six feet high. The brain generally is the dynamo of the body. It is only the thin film of nervous tissue over the forepart of it that is the organ of intelligence. As a matter of fact, we have the tools, weapons, and decorations of these Cro-Magnon men. They are at about the same level as those of the Eskimo. Moreover, European ethnologists assure us that the Cro-Magnon type of head is still common in northern Spain and southern France: amongst the stupid peasants, not the aristocracy. The Cro-Magnon genius is a clumsy myth.

This is no place to tell all the facts, but the reader may care to know how it is that such a myth could arise. The truth is that twenty or thirty thousand years ago the European race was advancing rather rapidly in comparison with its advance of the previous ten million years. Do not misunderstand. Man's progress even then was enormously slower than it is today. Moreover, we quite understand the quickening of the pace. Man was in the throes of his

struggle with the Great Ice Age. You must read elsewhere all that that meant for man. It led to articulate speech, clothing, social life and a hundred new things.

It would be too ironical to claim that man became gifted with a soul just when he came to disbelieve in it! But we moderns have made more mental progress in a century than the race ever before made in a millennium. Do not be misled by the brilliance of a score of Greeks two thousand years ago. The *race* has made far more progress in our time. Do not listen to essayists who tell you that the race has made no mental progress since twenty thousand years ago. They are thinking of the myth of the Cro-Magnon race. *Ours* is the great age of advance—and of Materialism.

But that is another story. For the moment our case is complete. Evolution makes the belief in an immortal soul improbable in the last degree. It does not disprove it. We do not attempt to prove negative statements. But, clearly, we now, in face of the general law of death and man's continuity with the animals, demand very strong and clear proof of the religious claim.

IS THE MIND A SPIRIT?

Many readers will be impatient of the caution, the reserve, the timidity, with which I draw my conclusions. If man's mind is but a gradual evolution of the mind of the ape, why not say outright that the myth of the soul has been disproved? If there is no serious evidence for God in nature or in the mind or the heart of man, while there is so much that excludes the idea of a divine ruler, why not declare bluntly that you are an Atheist?

For the following reason: Materialism—which means that matter alone can exist, and therefore that spirit does not exist—and Atheism are dogmatic negations. I do not like dogmatic negations. The old Scottish jury-verdict "Not proven" seems to me the more rational attitude. But on this question of the soul there are strong reasons for hesitating, and we must see these first.

The brain is the organ of the mind. We all admit that. A genius or an idiot is a man with an abnormal brain. The mind, a believer might say, can express itself only according to the quality of its organ or instrument. Paderewski himself could not make perfect music with a hundred-dollar piano. So we may suppose that the spiritual and immortal soul was there all the time, but it could not express itself until the organ was perfectly developed.

A very sound principle—in the abstract. It is conceivable that mind is a spiritual artist using a material instrument. Luther Burbank said somewhere that Mr. Bryan, of whom he was a personal friend, had a "skull which visibly approached the Neanderthal type." So the many foolish things Mr. Bryan said may have been due only to the imperfectness of his mind's instrument. The mind

may be the same, all the time, in everybody. It may be merely the brain that differs, from age to age, and in different individuals now.

All this is conceivable; in fact, we may find it useful later in this chapter. But the religious person must think clearly what he is saying. When does he suppose that God created the immortal mind of man? He might as well put the great event in the Miocene Age, since there is no other time more suitable. Well, we are to see in the next chapter that there probably is no God to create a soul, but even granting that there is, the whole thing remains a painful mystery. Why create the soul millions of years before it can act? Why go on creating souls—for the only plausible theological theory is that the soul has to be created in each individual human being—during those millions of years of the lowest savagery? Not very plausible, is it?

Moreover, let us reflect for a moment on this musical instrument idea. Sir Oliver Lodge is very fond of using this figure of speech, and it is as superficial as most of his work in the field of religion. Preachers find it most impressive. The brain is merely the organ, the piano, the violin, the harp. The soul is the musician.

A figure of speech is useful only if it helps you to understand something. Now this musical instrument idea only helps you to understand the relation of mind and body by *assuming precisely the point which you have to prove.* That point is whether the mind is a spirit, and the action of the musician's mind on the piano does not help us in the least unless we suppose, to begin with, that it is a spirit. If, as many hold, the mind is only a function of the brain, then it is a question of the action of matter (brain and muscle) on matter. It illustrates nothing.

In any case, even on religious principles, the mind does not play on the body. It is one with the body. They make a composite being of the most intimate nature. There is not the least analogy with the musician, who can close his piano and leave it when he likes. The "analogy" is just a slipshod, superficial substitute for accurate thinking.

To return, however, to our point. We all admit that the brain is the organ of the mind. The Materialist says that the mind is merely a function of the brain, and there are quite brilliant scientific men, such as Dr. Chalmers Mitchell or the late Professor Loeb, who say this. The believer in immortality—the Spiritualist in the proper sense of the word—says that mind is a spirit which uses brain as its organ.

It has always been an insoluble problem in religious philosophy how a spirit can act on or through matter. I do not want to press this, but the reader who is inclined to think that "God" and "soul" explain things ought to be reminded of it. No thinker who ever lived has given us the least plausible idea how spirit can act on or

with matter. It merely introduces new mysteries instead of "explaining" the mystery of thought.

So again, and for the third time, we have a reason for demanding that the proofs of the spirituality of the soul shall be particularly strong. There is a strong presumption against it: (1) because death is the rule of the universe, (2) because man's mind is certainly evolved from a mind that is not spiritual and immortal, and (3) because it is unintelligible and creates more mysteries than it solves. And we shall see further reasons later in this chapter.

But a presumption against a statement is not a disproof of it. Let us be open-minded and logical. Practically all philosophers hold that the mind is a spirit. Why?

By the way, it occurs to me that the believer will have a sudden gush of joy on reading the preceding sentence. For once, he will exclaim, I have "practically all" the experts on my side, because philosophers are experts in this matter. But the point is not so important as it may seem. In the first place, half these philosophers say that the natural world does not exist. Do you follow them in that? In the second place, very few of them believe in personal immortality. I am sorry to discourage hope, but philosophy (of which I was once a professor) is a dangerous ally to invoke.

Let us first see what we mean by spirit. I hope I have many religious readers, and I invite them frequently just to reflect on what they mean. What do you mean by spirit? How does it differ from matter? I have had a very large experience in asking this question, and I scarcely ever got a coherent answer to it. Nine-tenths, at least, of the preachers and essayists who tell the world that its future depends entirely on cultivating the spirit and avoiding Materialism could not tell you what spirit is. Spiritual books always forget to define it.

The religious philosophy which I taught thirty years ago was clear enough on the point. Matter, it is said, is extended or quantitative substance. It has dimensions. It consists of parts, and so it can be dissolved. Spirit has no parts, no dimensions, no quantity, no extension. It has only qualities.

I do not think that any better definitions have ever yet been given. Body is quantitative, and can dissolve into its parts. Mind is not quantitative (they say) and so cannot dissolve into parts, or die. So said the learned Aristotle, and we cannot go much further. Modern definitions of "matter" do not improve on his. It is generally said to be "that which occupies space," which is the same thing. Spirit is like a mathematical point. It has no magnitude.

It may not sound so warm and thrilling to say that your soul is a non-quantitative substance, but on this point depends entirely your hope of immortality. You have to prove that your mind is immaterial or unextended. What are the proofs?

The Roman Catholic philosophy, which prides itself on being

the severest and most logical, while it is merely the most medieval, is very confident about the matter. I have ideas of things: pictures of them in my mind. Let us say that I have a mental picture of a beautiful woman; that I see one before me. I am conscious of the picture as a whole. I may fasten my attention on her hands, her feet, or her bosom, but I may also contemplate her as a whole. Now if consciousness is a function of the brain, how can I see such a picture as a whole? Each cell in the brain is composed of innumerable atoms, and each atom is composed of tens or hundreds of protons and electrons, at an appreciable distance from each other. Each atom, nay, each electron, ought to have its own fraction of the brain-picture, on the Materialist hypothesis. The unifying principle at the back of matter must, surely, be a spiritual substance, a soul, which has no atoms or parts.

This seems to me a better argument than most of those one finds in modern or Modernist literature, but the fact only shows how feeble the modern arguments are, for even this one is a tissue of fallacies.

Take a sleep-walker. He has no consciousness. On the spiritual hypothesis, his soul is switched off from his body. One theory of sleep is that the cells of the brain draw in the little branchlets or fibrils by means of which they ordinarily communicate with each other. Something like that happens in the brain. In any case, the soul, the supposed seat of consciousness, is switched off for the time being. The body acts mechanically and automatically. Yet objects are "seen" as a whole, as the conduct of the somnambulist shows. He avoids every obstacle. Put a table in his path, and he goes round it.

The truth is that those who use this and similar arguments are simply building on the temporary ignorance of science, just as they do when they try to prove the existence of God. Candidly, we do not know how we see objects as a whole. For the matter of that, we do not know how we see them at all. That is precisely why many philosophers deny the existence of material objects. There are, they say, only images in the mind, and from these you may more or less riskily infer that there are objects corresponding to them outside the mind.

The whole mental world is still obscure in the last degree. Psychology is largely a matter of verbiage, and it declines entirely to speculate on the nature of mind or consciousness. I have read all the attempts to explain consciousness, and I cannot see anything in them but words. The human brain is immeasurably the most complicated structure in the universe (as far as our knowledge goes). It consists of hundreds of millions of cells put together in a structure which we as yet very imperfectly understand. Each cell consists of millions of molecules, put together in a way we do not understand at all; for molecular structure is below the range of our

most powerful microscopes. Each molecule, further, consists of atoms, put together in a structure which we very imperfectly conjecture. And, finally, we now know that each atom is a wonderfully complicated world of protons and electrons.

So who is going to say what the brain can or cannot do? Men who use the argument I have described imagine a brain-image of an object as a miniature picture of it spread over a certain surface. It is not in the least likely. What would the brain-stores of a very learned man be like in that case?

Or take it this way. You see a tree. Some sort of image of it is impressed on your retina by the waves of light. This is no more a picture of it than a phonograph record is a tune. Then this impression on the retina is converted into some kind of movement along your optic nerve. It is now still less like a picture of the tree. The nerve-movement is converted into something else in the optic center of the brain, and finally you see a tree. To say that there is a little picture of a green tree with yellow oranges in your brain is absurd.

We do not know what the machinery of perception is and cannot build any argument on it. We do not know where and how we are conscious of the objects we see. We have not the least idea what it is that is "stored in memory." We have still less idea how we can fuse together all the particular men we ever saw and get the general abstract idea of "man." We do not know how we can draw inferences and make arguments. We know very, very little about mind.

Then, you say, it may be a spirit. If people were content to say "may be," we should not much object, though we have seen strong reason for thinking that it is not. What we object to is the religious assertion that it *is* a spirit. There is no proof of this whatever. For all we know, it may be merely a function of the brain.

And a hundred things suggest that it is merely a function of the brain. Mind varies with every minute alteration of the brain. A fever or an opiate speeds up the mental activity. A heavy meal or a dose of alcohol benumbs it. During the War the Germans gave their shock-troops a certain drug which made them giants in "spirit" for the time being. It is difficult to understand—impossible, in fact, —how a spirit-mind can act on the brain; but it is the easiest thing in the world for chemicals to act on the mind.

To sum up the whole matter, people generally *assume* that the mind is a spirit and the reason generally is that mind is "so very different" from matter. I quite understand the force of the impression. At times I reflect on this wonderful thing, that this whole vast universe can be mirrored in the tiny mind of man; that the mind can reconstruct scenes in the story of the earth which passed away millions of years ago or scenes in the interior of atoms which no eye will ever behold.

But it is only the imagination that is impressed. The intellect

waits upon the advance of science. Not in our time—not, possibly, for centuries—will science unravel the mysteries of mind and brain. Mind *ought* to be far more wonderful than anything else in the universe. Its organ, the brain, is the most wonderfully intricate material structure that exists. When we understand that structure, we shall know whether or not consciousness is merely a function of it. Until then there is no logic whatever in pretending to say what can, and what cannot, be a function of the brain. There is no force in saying that something *must* be a spirit until you know positively that it *cannot* be material.

WHAT IS PERSONALITY?

Until not many years ago the provision of milk in a mother's breast just when she needed it for the babe was a mystery. But for the delicacy of the subject I suppose that preachers would have chosen it as an impressive proof of the soul or God, and their audiences of women would have been deeply impressed.

Then a London professor set about investigating the mystery, and it is a mystery no longer. A woman's breasts are stimulated by a certain chemical. This chemical is poured into the blood by the foetus in her womb, and, naturally, the more the foetus grows, the more of the drug it produces, so the stimulation reaches its maximum at a time when the foetus is largest and is ready for birth. We can extract the chemical from the foetus of a rat and inject it into the veins of a rat which is not pregnant, and, although she does not require milk, she gets it.

You might take that as a parable. What science cannot explain today it may explain tomorrow, and the man who builds on its ignorance today will retreat tomorrow. For the last hundred years the theologian has been engaged in retreating: of course, "upon positions which were prepared in advance."

But I quote this to introduce a new aspect of the question of immortality. What on earth can the rat or the foetus have to do with it? Nothing whatever, but this material secretion which stimulates the milk-glands introduces us to new discoveries in science that do bear on the subject.

If you open a physiological book of the last century, you find many references to the telegraphic system in the human body. The nerves are the wires. The brain is the central station. A fly hits against your eye. A message goes to your brain: an order is flashed back along another nerve: and in a fraction of a second you raise your hand and brush the fly away.

The new discovery is that there is a postal, as well as a telegraphic, system in the body. Letters are posted in the blood, and they travel round the vascular system until they reach their destination. In other words, certain small glands in the interior of the body pour chemicals into the blood, and these are carried round

and round until they reach the part which they are to stimulate. I will assume that every reader has heard of the thyroid gland, which is one of them, and I must refrain here from any further account.

The point is that the thyroid and some of the other glands have a most profound effect upon our mental vitality and our personality. The character of an old man can be rejuvenated. A born idiot can be transformed into a sane child. Whole districts in which a large portion of the children have for ages been born idiots (cretins) have been rid of idiots by means of thyroid extract. When we have mastered the chemical nature of the stuff produced and poured into the blood by these glands, when we can make it in the laboratory and sell it in the drug store, it will be time to talk of the musician playing on the piano. For then the chemist will play on the "spirit," on human nature, as no religion ever did.

Now the point of this is that we have one more illustration of the way in which mind depends upon body. We were, of course, quite familiar with this. In the very early days of science temperaments or characters were divided into four main types: the lymphatic (sluggish), choleric, bilious and sanguineous. This was crude psychology, but it expressed the well-known fact that a very great deal of a man's personality depends upon his bodily qualities. Nerve and brain, stomach and liver and pancreas, blood and muscular tone, all have their respective influences on what we call character. Drugs still further complicate the character. I spoke once of the "genius" of a certain British author to a man who is the highest living authority on him. "Genius?" he said: "No, simply nicotine." A man drunk is often not the same man sober. And now we know that the quality of a man's endocrinal glands has an even greater influence on those qualities which make up what we call his personality.

The question therefore naturally arises: What sort of a thing will the soul be even if we suppose it to be immortal? Philosophers, as I said, assume that the mind is a spirit. It is singular how little they think of proving this. The order of ideas and that of material realities seem to them to differ so profoundly that the former is referred to a spirit-world; when, as we saw, we do not know sufficient about the brain to say that ideas *cannot* be aspects, or functions of material things. However, philosophers rarely believe in personal immortality. Psychologists still more rarely accept it. There are very few real experts on the subject in the world who do.

Now you know why. It was always quite impossible to imagine how the mind could think without a brain. As usual, it was cheerfully said to be a mystery—while the general public imagines that the soul "explains" thought. Now we see that whether the soul could or could not think when it is disembodied, it certainly cannot have anything like the personality it had on earth.

Think of every little trait or feature of the child or the woman you love. The golden curls or fine glossy hair, the soft blue or fine brown eyes, the round limbs and graceful carriage—these things, of course, go down into the grave forever. But even the features of character depend entirely on the body. The vitality, the sweetness or quaintness of disposition, the warm affection, the reserve or the spontaneous effusiveness—all depend on bodily organs. What will this disembodied soul of wife or mother, whom you hope to meet again, be like? What will even memory be without the brain? For whatever be its nature, it depends vitally on the brain.

This doctrine of immortality begins to look very far from simple and satisfactory when you examine it. The pagan Romans, whose cold and vague attitude towards a future life was so much derided by the new Christians, were nearer the truth; quite apart from the fact that the view of the future life which Christianity brought was, with its eternal torment for the majority of the race, the most repulsive yet formulated. The Roman, like the Babylonian, believed that the soul survived the grave, but it was a pale, thin "shade" that survived. He had little interest in it.

In psychology, in fact, the idea of soul has long since been surrendered. It became the science of the mind, not of the soul. But the more progress the science made, the less it liked the idea of a substantial something of which ideas and emotions were individual acts. All that we are sure about now is that there are ideas and emotions and volitions. The world of consciousness is a world of atoms of consciousness. But whence comes the unity of conscious life? It may, surely, come from the unity of the nervous system, the most completely centralized structure in the universe.

In other words: religious ideas not only melt into mysteries and unintelligibilities when you analyze them, but they are decidedly in conflict with our new knowledge. And it is not a question of evolution only. The science of psychology itself must have a deadly effect on belief when hardly one in ten of our psychologists believes in personal immortality. But the most deadly solvent of religious belief—let the anti-evolutionists realize this—is the patient examination of the so-called evidence which is offered us in support of it. This makes ten Agnostics for every one that is made by the teaching of science.

I have said that Materialism seems to me too dogmatic an attitude. It might be added that what we commonly call matter is now known to be *not* the ultimate reality of the universe, so it may be questioned if the term is a good one. Matter is composed of mysterious things which we call electrons and protons. Many physicists say that it is composed of "energy," and some call themselves Energists. It seems more likely that ether is the ultimate reality, and those who like labels might adopt that of Etherist. Most of

us prepare to leave it to a much wiser generation to put a comprehensive label on the universe.

Yet, the Agnostic attitude must not be understood to mean that it is a quite open question whether the mind is or is not a spirit. I mean, we must not in the least suppose that the chances are even. The thinkers of the race have been weighing this question ever since the days of Socrates. In fact, we can clearly enough see that educated men, apart from the clergy, were speculating on these fundamental religious issues in Egypt four or five thousand years ago. In Asia, Buddha and Confucius came to the conclusion that religious speculation was a waste of time several centuries before the great thinkers of Athens appeared, and the earliest Greek thinkers seem to have been of the same opinion.

Now, what has been the general issue of these thousands of years of thinking about God and the soul? Has anything been settled on the religious side? Nothing. We are no wiser than the first thinkers. We rule out the "proofs" of immortality given by Plato and St. Augustine, and we have no better to offer. In the spiritual scale of the balance there are only arguments about which there is no agreement whatever.

The whole weight of our new knowledge falls into the material scale, against immortality. Modern philosophy, when it started, at once shattered the older proofs, which Roman Catholics still use. Evolution proved a deadly weight against the belief. Psychology, as it evolved, turned against it. Physiology, as this chapter shows, throws all its weight into the Materialistic scale. Not a single fact has been discovered in the last hundred years that favors the view that the mind is a spirit. We remain open-minded, but with little doubt about the result.

MODERN THEORIES OF IMMORTALITY

Ours is the age of reconstruction, not only of all beliefs, but of all arguments for the beliefs. We think of man as profoundly conservative in his nature and anxious, if possible, to cling to his old beliefs in some form. And this is said to be particularly true of religious beliefs. Many imagine the soul of the race in our time as heroically braving the great new waves of thought in an effort to preserve its religious identity.

All this kind of rhetoric is false to the obvious facts of life. It is always a few who do the reconstructing of beliefs and arguments, and these few are nearly always people who have an interest in the survival of the beliefs. This is, surely, a plain reading of the facts of life. The majority of the race are profoundly indifferent to the disappearance of the old traditions. New religions, even of the most liberal character, make little appeal to them. Even the movement for Ethical Culture, which describes itself as religion without the

least theology, makes almost no progress either in America or in England.

Let us finish with the "proofs" which modern theologians attempt to give of the immortality of the soul. The more learned of them frankly give it up. Immortality is, they say, a matter of faith. An infinite God can make us immortal, and the Bible says that He will.

This, unfortunately, is to prop up a feeble and tottering belief by means of two other beliefs which are just as feeble and tottering. We may see this about the belief in God. We may see it about the belief in the inspiration of the Bible. I cannot imagine what comfort the argument gives to anybody.

Other religious writers prefer to say that, while they cannot prove the spirituality and immortality of the soul, they can suggest reasons for believing in it. For instance, some of them say, science has discovered that the conservation of energy is a law of the universe. No energy is ever destroyed or annihilated. So the mental energy must persist. The soul must survive.

An extraordinarily feeble argument. Let us admit—with certain reserves about the energy of electrons—the general truth that energy is never annihilated. But it is just as universal a law that energy is constantly changing its form, and when the energy is associated with a complex material structure, and that structure breaks up, it is bound to change its form very materially.

Luther Burbank recently startled California, of which he was one of the greatest citizens, by declaring that he did not believe in the immortality of the soul. It disappears at death, he said, just like the life of the old automobile that is condemned to the scrap-heap. That is a very good figure of speech. The life or soul—the particular function—of the automobile does not continue to exist. It breaks up into the separate energies of the parts of the machine or of the fuel which is no longer used. So says the Materialist of the human mind, and what he says is perfectly consistent with the law of the conservation of energy. The law is not that any particular form of energy shall be preserved or conserved *as such*. It is rather the reverse.

Sir Oliver Lodge, who uses this argument, helps it out with another which is worse. I am constantly asked why a "great physicist" like Sir Oliver Lodge is found on the side of religion. Well, to begin with, he is not a "great" physicist, and, secondly, his science, physics, is precisely the one which least qualifies him to deal with religious questions. It has nothing to do with the nature of life or mind. But, thirdly, I have shown in my "Religion of Sir Oliver Lodge" that there is not a single doctrine of the Christian religion which he accepts, and, fourthly, he is just one of the survivors of the little scientific group which was duped by mediums in the early uncritical days of Spiritualism.

Sir Oliver has discovered a remarkable principle which helps him to prove the immortality of the soul. Whatever really exists just goes on existing: always existed and always will. The mind really exists, therefore . . . .

Quite simple, isn't it? In fact, rather too simple. There is no such principle. Matter and energy go on existing *in some form.* That is all we can say. So the body goes on existing in some form, but its functions do not. The whole argument assumes what it sets out to prove: that the mind is not a function of the brain.

Then there is a philosophical argument which has of late years gone the round of "advanced" religious literature. It is called the argument from the conservation of values. A man grows up to wisdom and settled character and personality. Can we suppose that all this is to be thrown away by the act of death? What a shocking waste it would be if each individual is to learn laboriously to become wise and to form his character, and then it were all to be annihilated: if the human race were during millions of years to construct its wonderful science and art and idealism and all were to end in the great silence of the death of the race.

So the argument runs: and the answer requires little reflection. What does the great inanimate universe care about waste? What does it know of values and of conserving them? Quite clearly, the argument has no sense whatever unless you mean that you are appealing to God. It is not very forcible even then, but it has not the least meaning except in so far as it relies on the wisdom or power of God, and we have seen how far you can appeal to that.

Other writers keep recalling from its well-merited rest an argument which was much used in the early days of science. The matter of the human body is always changing. Nerve and muscle wear out. Even the material of the bones is withdrawn and replaced in the course of time. It is commonly said that the entire material of the body changes every seven years. We do not, in fact, know how long it takes. We can put bands on a pigeon's leg bones, and see how long it takes for them to disappear, but no man can say the time for all the organs of the body, especially the brain. There is, however, no doubt about the fact. Probably I have not now a single atom of the body I had ten years ago. Yet I am the same person, and I vividly remember experiences of ten, and even forty, years ago.

Quite so. But I have already explained that mind is said to be a function of the brain, and, if so, it depends upon the structure of the brain, which does not change. Molecule by molecule the material is renewed, but the structure even of each individual cell remains unaltered. An idea, we saw, is not a miniature picture of an object, spread over a certain area. It is an activity of the brain.

Suppose you regard the beauty or grace or symmetry of an ancient cathedral as a function or aspect of its structure. You may

go on for centuries restoring a beam here or a few stones there. It is conceivable that in time you might renew nearly the whole material of it. But the identity remains.

It is conceivable that—if it were worth while—you could in time renew all the parts of your automobile. There might not be left a single bit of the original machine. But its function would be unaltered, and most particularly if, as in the case of the human body, there were some subtle way of replacing atom by atom, without disturbing the structure, the original material of the machine.

Finally, there are those who find an argument in the moral order. In so far as this argument merely appeals to the fact that man has moral perceptions, a criticism which I make in Chapter v, "The Futility of Belief in God," disposes of it.

Moral law is social law, and it is as easily formulated by the mind itself as what we commonly call law is. Philosophers like the famous Kant or the modern German thinker Eucken write about conscience and the moral law as if they had never taken the trouble to study men in the flesh. There is no such thing as a "categorical imperative," as Kant said. There is no such thing as an eternal moral order existing apart from the material order, existing before humanity was born and independent of it, as Eucken says. For most of us there is just a moral ideal implanted in us by education and evolved out of the needs of social life.

Nor is there any force whatever in the claim that this commanding law implies that God is prepared to reward the observer of it in another life. You cannot rely on the disputed existence of God to prove a disputed immortality.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

In several of his works my friend Professor Haeckel, whose fine and vigorously honorable character was personally known to me, gives God, Freedom and Immortality as the three fundamental religious beliefs. They are. And it is unfortunate for the believer that the independent experts on these subjects are overwhelmingly against him. Few philosophers believe in a personal God. Few psychologists believe in free will or personal immortality.

I can imagine a religious reader saying to himself that in this case at least he does not care a rap about the experts. He will quite understand that I am nowhere trying to intimidate him with the authority of experts. I merely ask him to reflect on the significance of the fact that all or the majority of the men who have devoted their lives to a particular study are against him, and that on his side are only preachers with poor training and little knowledge.

But what he will reply here is that the best expert on himself is he himself. He knows whether or not he has free will, he says. When it comes to a question of his summer holiday, he is free to choose

between ten different places. He pleases himself whether he wears a straw or a felt hat, whether he is a Republican or a Democrat.

And if man has this pure power of choice between alternatives, his mind is not of the order of material realities. There is no freedom for matter. It goes where it is pushed or pulled. Even the moth which flies round the candle is ruled by a purely mechanical principle. If man is free, if his will can act without compulsion or coercion from any power or motive, then man *does* stand out from all the rest of the universe, and the law of death may not be for him. His mind must be an indissoluble spirit.

But plain folk must recollect that psychologists have just the same consciousness as they have, and have a far greater ability to analyze it. They have been analyzing and disputing about this apparent consciousness of freedom for a century. And they are now generally agreed that it is an illusion. Surely that has some significance.

Let us take it in our own way. When you say that you are free to choose—say, between the train and the surface car, or between the movies and the theater—you are using rather ambiguous language. All common speech for expressing mental experiences is loose and ambiguous. You have the two alternatives—movies or theater—in your mind. You hover between them. You do not feel any compulsion to choose one or the other. Then you deliberately say to yourself—not realizing that you have thereby proved the spirituality of the soul, which has made apologists perspire for centuries—"I choose Greta Garbo."

Well, let us examine it patiently. In the ordinary acts of life you behave automatically. You don your clothes and shave and eat and walk, and even work, in a mechanical way. The motive arises, by routine, at the proper moment, and the action follows. It is only in graver things—such as whether you shall go to see Greta Garbo or Bebe Daniels—that you use your freedom. To be quite accurate—am I not right?—it is only when two or more motives seem to have about equal force that you are conscious of your freedom. If one motive, if the reason for doing one action, is palpably stronger than the reason for doing the alternative, you do not hesitate. The "will" follows or acts on the stronger motive.

Why, you ask, do I put "will" in inverted commas? It may shock you to know that psychologists are not sure that there is such a thing. You may be surprised to know that your "will" is only a theory. What you are really conscious of is a series of acts. It is just a theory of yours that there is a thing you call your will behind them.

Well, to come back to the "acts of will." When you hesitate between two courses, do you for a moment doubt that your will eventually follows the one which seems to you wiser or more profitable? Yes, I know. Just to prove your freedom you may

choose the less wise course. But in that case you merely have a new motive thrown into the scale. Your "will" always follows the weightier motive. How, then, is it free? All that you are conscious of is the hesitation of your mind, because for a time one motive balances the other. They may remain so balanced that you do nothing, or leave it to others to decide. But if you do decide, you are merely conscious that the battle of motives is over and the stronger carries your will.

But, you ask, what about moral responsibility? What about praising and blaming people for their conduct? What about crime and its punishment? Is not our whole social and moral system based upon the theory that a man is responsible for his actions?

Again we have a tangle of rhetoric, which we must unravel, and some serious questions which we must seriously discuss.

The reader who is genuinely alarmed about crime and criminals, either on account of sermons he has heard or from his own reflections on the subject, ought to study the statistics of crime. In such matters it is the facts that count. He will find that crime has steadily decreased during the whole modern period when free will and religion have been just as steadily abandoned. The greatest reformers in the treatment of crime, the men who have done more than any others in initiating measures which led to its reduction—Beccoria, Bentham, Lombroso—were Rationalists who did not believe in free will. It is a century and a half since their ideas began to be adopted, and in proportion as they were adopted, crime has diminished.

In the United States crime is abnormally high. But this is no reflection on the normal character of the American, which is finer than it ever was before, and is as fine as any in the world. The very large figures of crime are due to political conditions. In England and other normal civilizations, where there is at least an equal amount of unbelief, crime has been reduced by fifty per cent and it is now at its lowest level.

So much for the pulpit cry that we are in danger of an orgy of crime and violence. But, you will say, we cannot logically blame the criminal if he has no free will.

What does it matter? The practical point is that you can make unsocial conduct or crime very unattractive to the man who may be disposed to indulge in it. The sentence inflicted today is not so much a punishment. It is not the revenge of society for an injury done to it. The penal system is now an intimidation. We lodge in the mind of the possible criminal a very strong motive to deter him.

The cat which steals your chop or your chicken has no free will. You admit that. Well, do you take it in your arms and say: "Poor dear, you only acted according to your nature?" And are you logical if, on the contrary, you thrash it, to teach it propriety? When you pat on the head the dog or the horse that has done good service,

and so encourage it to repeat its performance, are you acting foolishly? You know better. Good feeling as a reward of good conduct is a new motive to the will. The frown or the stroke of society is a deterrent.

So far it is easy. Determinism, or the theory that denies free will, has no social consequences whatever, except good ones. When we grasp the real nature of the criminal, we treat him more wisely. We are, on Determinist principles, slowly eliminating him.

Candidly, it is not so easy to talk about praise and blame and responsibility in other than criminal matters. When you have a social practice founded upon thousands of years of wrong ideas the readjustment is not easy. But it is really only a question of reading a new shade of meaning into the words.

It is clear that we can still imprison or otherwise annoy people who act criminally, though we do not "punish" them in the old sense. It is just as clear that a man is responsible to his fellows for any evil consequences of his acts, and, since the moral law is social law, he has moral responsibility. I mean that society has just as much right to protect itself from breaches of those laws which we call moral—such real moral laws as truthfulness and justice—as it has against breaches of common law, and for this purpose it can quite sensibly use the system of reward and punishment which we call praise and blame. We praise or blame the act, because of its consequences. We know quite well that there was no free will in it.

Did you ever applaud Tetrazzini or some great actor or actress? Did you ever cheer an athlete? There was no free will in the performance. A singer happens to have an exceptionally good larynx; an athlete to have some abnormal muscle or nerve. But what would you say if a man in black rose in the audience and said: "Don't applaud. These people are not responsible for their gifts."

Well, tell that to the next man in black who says that we cannot on Determinist principles praise or blame conduct. Until good or social conduct is automatic, as it will be one day, society has every right to smile encouragement or frown its disapproval. The price of a lie shall be an unpleasant quarter of an hour. As long as we have something of the nature of the cat left in us, we may be treated as even a humane person treats a cat.

CHAPTER V

The Futility of Belief in God

The Silence of God—Who Made the World?—Does Evolution Exclude God—The Voice of Conscience—The Religious Instinct—Disproofs

The Silence of God

A WEEK or two ago I stood on the brink of a dark, strange pool in central Yucatan. It lay deep in a large round pit in the midst of the forest, some two hundred yards from the temples and sacred buildings which explorers had stripped of their mantle of bush and their mounds of earth.

This was once a great Maya city. Now fat lizards sunned themselves in the rocky ledges of the sheer sides of the pool. Tender foliage overhung the edge and was mirrored in the quiet water. A paved road led to the pool from the temples, and, where it reached the edge of the pool, it ended in a raised parapet of stone.

And I half close my eyes and people the deserted woods with the men and women who trod that road a thousand years ago. A sacred procession comes along it, and with the austere priests are flower-decked maidens in festive dress. But in spite of flowers and fine robes, in spite of throbbing music and thousands of spectators, a look of terror quivers piteously in the maidens' eyes. They are going to die. The god wants victims. The priests say so. In a few moments these fairest things that life produces, young girls in the fresh bloom of womanhood, will be hurled from the parapet into the pool, fifty feet below, and they and their mothers must stifle their agony in a pretense of blessedness.

Well, you say, that was in the heart of Yucatan, and a thousand years ago.

A thousand miles away is the ghost of the city of another ancient American people, and guides will show you the stone on which priests stretched their victims to pluck out the heart and offer it to the sun-god. Still ancient America, you say. But away over the earth, in the islands of the Pacific, in central Africa, the gods still clamored for the blood of men only a few decades ago. In ancient Rome, in Carthage, in Britain, in Syria—remember the story of Abraham and Isaac—these ghastly sacrifices had been demanded. During countless ages of human history men and maidens had been slain in the name of gods.

Where was God? I do not ask you why He tolerated these crimes in His name for thousands of years, because the answer will be that you do not know. But you cannot blot all these horrors out of the memory of man by light assurances that the finite mind cannot hope to comprehend the infinite. It is a truism; but the facts remain. From near the dawn of religion, which was many tens of thousands of years ago, horrible things have been done, and grotesque things believed, in the name of God. I am merely asking you for the moment to admit to yourself that you hold that God, your God, looked down complacently from his state of blessedness during long ages upon all the grisly blunders and tortures of the children of men, yet might have ended the whole ghastly folly in one generation.

We know not why he takes time, you say, but the hour comes. When? At Cholula I see a Christian church perched on the top of a pyramid which once bore one of these bloody Mexican temples. To the Catholics of the district it is a symbol of the at-last triumph of revelation and mercy over human error and brutality. They do not reflect that they believe that God made those blundering and brutal humans of long ago; that he could have made them wiser in a year as easily as in a hundred thousand years.

Moreover, to the Protestant this pyramid-church merely means that one ghastly error in the name of God has been substituted for another. An improvement certainly: men ought to grow wiser in the course of two thousand generations. Hearts are not physically plucked out of living bodies in the Roman Church. No, they are sacrificed in a different way. Near by is a nunnery, and priests lead prettily dressed maidens to the altar to make the vow of celibacy which they understand little more than does the babe in arms, and which means living death to the heart.

The Mayas and Aztecs went, but cruel things were still done for centuries, and are done today all over the world, in the name of God. And God was still silent. He was silent when women were drowned as witches, and honest men were burned as heretics. He was silent when the savage and demoralizing doctrine of eternal torment was, in his name, imposed upon the whole earth, four thousand years after the founding of civilization. He is still silent when—as happened in Tennessee recently—the ill-educated preacher tells the agonized mother that the soul of her dead and unbaptized babe burns, and will burn forever, in the most appalling fires the human imagination ever pictured.

I am not at present arguing about the existence of God. I am merely asking you to face manfully two facts: the long silence of God, the long martyrdom of man. We will argue about them later. First let us add two other facts. The belief in God today is strongest where man has least to thank God for, and it is weakest where men have most knowledge and most mental training. It is

universal only where life is poorest and where men have the least intelligence to perceive whether or not they are indebted to God.

Here and there in the world, both in Europe and in Latin America, you see what life was like a hundred or three hundred years ago. The very day before I sit down to write this I wander about in a little Cuban town not thirty miles from Havana. The drains run in open filthy streams in the center of the streets. Disease hovers about every child that plays innocently in the sunshine. Today little Rosita is a flower of the earth, the light and joy of one of these poor hut-homes. In a few days, perhaps, the claw of diphtheria will be on her tender throat, or the fiery poison of small-pox or typhus will run in her veins.

But they are all such staunch believers in God here in Guanajay that they would cross themselves if they knew *my* opinions. I have been amongst such people in Spain and Italy, in Greece and Serbia and Bulgaria. This was the common life of men two centuries ago, and as the conditions are improved by man, belief in God decays. It was skeptics from New York who purified Havana, thirty miles away, and Havana has now very many skeptics. *El Anti-Clerical,* a native skeptical paper, sells in its streets.

No, men now believe most deeply and most widely in God just where life is most treacherous, where poverty stings worst, where hearts are still torn out and sacrificed. And these men and women know less, and are less capable of thinking, than men in the skeptical cities where disease has been checked, where the burden is lighter. Somehow, the richer life grows, the less we thank God. The larger its problems grow, the less we consult God. The more knowledge grows, the smaller becomes the figure of God in the sky. The more learning a man has, the more likely you are to find him a skeptic.

Which of these statements would you dispute? It is, surely, a platitude that belief in God is least disturbed amongst the more backward nations of the earth: that it is most disturbed in the cities of the more advanced nations, and most of all in the learned world.

So it is with the practice of taking one's troubles and problems to God. He is not seriously invoked at Geneva, where the world's gravest problems are discussed. He is unknown in the Foreign Offices of the great Powers. There is some form of invoking divine guidance at Washington, and Westminster; but is it serious? Do our highest judges now pray before they give their gravest decisions? Do our leading physicians consult God—or medical works? No, God has been expelled from council and congress, school and law court, almost from the home. He is confined to the church.

It is strange to see how lightly the modern world abandoned God. In the great cities of Europe only a small minority ever go to a place of worship. It is unquestionably the same in America. The bishops of the Episcopal Church in America found, in war-time,

just the same proportion of men who never attended church as was found in England: nine out of ten.

Now, we can take a census of church-goers, as we have done in London and Paris, but there is no census of sincere opinions, and we do not know how many of these non-church-goers still believe in God. I have quoted one of the gravest of the English bishops saying: "Belief in God is dead in England." That is certainly a large exaggeration; but we do find by daily contact with the crowd that millions in our cities now no longer believe in God, or are so indifferent about the matter that they can hardly say whether or not they believe.

For the other fundamental religious belief, the faith in immortality, men, even after giving up the Christian creed, make some sort of struggle. But few plead for God, outside the Christian Churches. The belief is slowly dying. And God is still silent. He might write in letters of fire across the firmament at night, and we should all return to our knees. He is silent.

But he *has* written on the firmament once for all, you may say. On every stone of the fabric of the universe, you claim, there are the initials of the architect and builder. That is what we are going to study in this chapter.

One of the silliest calumnies that was ever invented is the statement that only coarse-minded men reject belief in God. There are, it is true, people who thrust the belief out of their minds wilfully and live rebelliously. These are exceptions. They were formerly far more common than now. Only a fool would defy a God: would purchase thirty years of pleasure at the price of an eternity of agony. In any case, the modern skeptic is a very real skeptic. His revolt is intellectual and emotional, and it is his finer emotions that cause his rejection of the idea of God.

Does that puzzle you? Recall the long silence of God of which I have spoken. Those bloody human blunders are only a small part of the story. Man did not create the germs of diphtheria and smallpox, even if, in his ignorance, he made nurseries for them. For countless millions of years deadly parasites of thousands of species have sucked or poisoned the blood of all other living things. For all these millions of years the carnivore has rent the flesh of his victim. Your intellect may say that this is a mystery. Your heart is disposed to say that there is no mystery: that blind nature, not conscious purpose, must have begotten these things. The heart is not on the side of God.

But the mind may have reasons which the heart knoweth not, to change the famous phrase of Pascal. You may think that you are able to silence the rebellion of the heart by heaping up formidable proofs that there *is* a God. On a question of fact the heart must yield to the head.

But here is another difficulty. Amongst those who are most

capable of thinking, there is no agreement whatever as to these "proofs" of the existence of God. It is another aspect of this terrible problem of the silence of God. From the days of Plato, from the time of Job, thoughtful men have racked their brains to find and formulate proof of the existence of God.

To the mass of mankind, of course, it is, and always was, simple. A famous preacher quotes with warm approval the saying of an Arab of the desert when some skeptic asked him how he knew that Allah existed. "How do I know that a camel has passed this way?" he asked, in reply, pointing to the footprints in the sand.

Strange, isn't it, that it should be so plain to the Arab and the farmer and the preacher, and so profound and difficult a problem to the thinker! Strange that in proportion as the mental eye is trained by education, the footprints on the sand seem to become fainter. Plato, the great Greek thinker, gave the world two thousand three hundred years ago what men regarded as the most brilliant proofs of the existence of God. Hardly any man sees any force in them today. Aristotle, an even greater thinker of the same age, gave other and quite different proofs. Hardly any man follows him today. St. Augustine tried next, and his arguments are just as antiquated. From those days to ours men have been inventing new arguments —we will consider them—and there is no agreement about any of them. The majority of our best thinkers, our philosophers, do not believe in the existence of a personal God. Not one of them admits any force in any of the popular arguments for God.

I ask you only to admit that the matter is not so simple as you thought: that the unbeliever is not exactly the "fool" described by the Hebrew Psalmist. It is a mighty problem. You cannot even understand the reasons why most of the deeper religious thinkers of our time believe in God unless you first learn the most difficult of all sciences—philosophy. It would take you years to understand what is called "the position of God in modern thought." And God is silent.

Well, these chapters are not written for philosophers. A simple account will be given later of what the philosophers are saying, but in the main I want to examine the reasons why the reader, or his religious neighbor, believes in God. A thousand million people still believe in God, and for much the same reasons, and scarcely a trained thinker in the world will admit that those reasons have any logical force. And God is silent.

WHO MADE THE WORLD?

In my many travels I never obtrude my opinions about religion. I write them, and I lecture about them, and those who will may read or hear. I do not trouble others. But, knowing my opinions, people talk to me about God and would understand why I cannot admit his existence. So they tell me why they believe in him,

and the argument most commonly takes the form of the question which I have made the title of this section: Who made the world, if there is no God?

The reader may have had a different experience, though it could hardly be a broader and more varied experience. Men and women, youths and maidens, preachers and lawyers and men of business, have put their belief to me in that form. And quite triumphantly. It was as plain as the lesson of the camel's footprint. And, knowing (or believing) that I am a person of average intelligence, they really wondered what I would reply.

And the reply, which is not really a reply at all, because the question is foolish, is deadly. You ask, *Who* made the world? Why not, *What* made the world? In fact—we will consider later the argument that the world-maker must be personal or intelligent—let us settle the question at once. We do it by asking another question: Prithee, how do you know that the world ever was made?

Do not tell me that it "stands to reason." The highest representatives of reason today are our philosophers and scientists, and I do not think that there is a single one of them now living who believes that the world was "made." They may be wrong, of course, but is it not more likely that there is something wrong with the basis of your simple proof?

Let us analyze it. In asking your questions you *assume* that the world was made. There is no need to define exactly what we mean by the "world" and "made." We mean the universe or (if there are many universes, as some astronomers think) all the universes. By "made" you mean created. You take it for granted that there was a time when the universe did not exist, and that at the word of God it sprang into existence. And that is just where you go astray. There is no proof whatever that the world had a beginning.

You will probably acknowledge at once that you had no definite reason for assuming that the world had a beginning. Everybody assumes it, simply because he has been taught for ages that Genesis, in its first line, says so. We shall see later what that means, and what it is worth. But you cannot quote "the word of God" until you have proved that there is a God. And apart from Genesis there is no ground for saying that the world ever had a beginning, so there is no meaning in asking who made it.

Do you mean, you will say, that the world is eternal? No. I mean that it may be, for all I know or anybody knows. It is for the person who says that it was made—that it had a beginning—to prove his assertion.

Until some sort of proof is given me that the world was made, it is useless, surely, to ask me to speculate as to who made it. Here it is. It may always have been here. I think it was.

In point of fact, practically all thinkers—scientists and philos-

ophers—now regard the world as eternal. Philosophers (and many others) do so because the idea of creation out of nothing is incomprehensible to them, and, after all, there is only the word of some unknown Hebrew writer of twenty-five hundred years ago in favor of this idea of creation.

Scientists regard the world as eternal, partly for the same reason, partly on account of what modern astronomy tells us. I am writing this at sunset on the deck of a great liner in the Gulf of Mexico. Soon the stars will shine out of the tropical dark purple sky as they never shine on land. A sharp eye can detect their difference in color: red, yellow, white and blue. They are of different temperatures, from dull red to steely blue, from about 3,000° to about 30,000° C. The most wonderful instrument we have, the spectroscope, confirms this.

And different temperatures mean different ages. The life of a star is its temperature. It begins (as all metal does) at a dull red, passes through yellow and white to a brilliant whitish-blue, then sinks through white and yellow to red. We can tell which of the red stars are increasing in temperature, are beginning their career, and which are in their last phase. Another wonderful instrument, invented in America a few years ago, tells us this. It measures them. At first the stars are of an immense size. I shall presently be gazing at one of the southern stars, Antares, the blood-red heart of the Scorpion, which we know to be four hundred million miles in diameter. Our sun is less than one million. Antares is beginning to contract. Our sun is far advanced in contraction. It is slowly dying.

In short, the stars differ in age as much as do the human beings in a busy city street. The only difference is that the baby-stars are giants, and the dying stars are dwarfs, and that the life of a star runs to billions of years. So myriads of stars will shine ages after our sun is dead. Myriads shone before our sun was born. And we see, all over the universe, the cloudy filmy material for making new stars when all our two billion stars have sunk into darkness. The universe is just like a nation, apparently. Generation succeeds generation. We have no reason to suspect a beginning or an end. Rather the reverse.

Naturally, we do not say dogmatically that the universe had no beginning. For my part, at least, I should never say positively that the world is eternal. I do not know enough, after fifty years of study, to be as dogmatic as preachers are. But we do know one thing. The stars differ from each other in age by billions of years. The old idea that for an eternity there was a void, and then, for some unknown reason, God spoke and the universe leaped into being, is certainly wrong. The stars would be of the same age if that were true.

Those who "reconcile" science and religion now often say that God merely created the material of the universe and allowed it, and

gave it the power, to evolve. This does not help in the least. We have no reason whatever to suppose that the matter of the universe ever had a beginning. So we have no reason to entertain the idea of its being created. You may choose to believe it, but you are believing and asserting something for which there is not a shred of proof.

Here and there in old-fashioned religious literature you find a curious attempt to prove that the world really had a beginning. The proof runs something like this: If the world is eternal, then the number of days, or units of time, which have already elapsed must be infinite. But the number is being added to every day, so it cannot be infinite. Therefore time is finite. They say much the same about space. If the universe is infinite, the number of miles out in any direction from our earth must be infinite. But there are just as many miles in the opposite direction, so . . .

I do not know whether the reader expects a patient analysis of this sort of verbiage. Writers who say these things are merely playing with ideas. There are no "days" or "miles" in nature. There is no such thing as an infinite series which is bounded at one end. The whole argument is preposterous.

And much the same must be said about a set of arguments for a maker of the universe which, like the preceding, are chiefly used in Roman Catholic literature. There are causes and effects in the universe, one argument runs, and therefore there must be a First Cause. There are movements in the universe, so there must be a Prime Mover, something ultimate which moves all and is not itself moved. There are things in the universe which exist by chance or contingency, but at the base of all there must be something that exists necessarily.

Roman Catholics are most amusingly proud of these curious arguments. They imagine that they are part of the great treasure of learning of the Catholic Middle Ages, and that Protestants have forfeited these wonderful demonstrations by severing themselves from Rome. The truth is that all such arguments were completely discredited more than a hundred years ago. They are mere words and phrases strung together. They "do but gather dust in our libraries," as the great American thinker, Professor William James, said of them.

Take the supposed argument for a First Cause. The idea of cause and effect is not taken very seriously in modern science and philosophy, but we will accept it as roughly expressing what we see in nature. Heat causes evaporation, electricity in the clouds causes thunder, and so on. And of course you must come ultimately to a fundamental cause or *causes*. There is no clear reason for saying that ultimately there is just *one* First Cause. There is no reason for giving it (or them) capital letters. In point of fact, ether (which Professor Dayton Miller has recently proved to be a

reality) is probably the ultimate or fundamental reality of the universe, the Prime Mover and all the rest of it. Until you prove that ether had a beginning—that there was a time when it did not exist —the mind cannot pass beyond it.

But how, we are asked, could a material reality like ether be the first cause of spiritual things like mind, emotion, idealism? A stream cannot rise above its source, we are told. Well, we cannot here discuss materialism and spiritualism. That is done elsewhere. We have seen that there is no proof that mind is spiritual, so there is no need to assume a spiritual reality and no need to use capital letters for the "First Cause" and "Prime Mover."

These dry-as-dust arguments are quite discredited in modern thought, and we will not waste further time on them. I notice them rather as illustrations of my point that most people believe in God on grounds which are disdainfully regarded by other believers in God as mere fallacies. They agree together only in saying that the existence of God is certain and the Atheist is a fool. After that each flatly denies that the "proofs" of the other are of any value whatever!

But there is another type of very zealous believer who thinks that his proof is in the strictest accord with science—is, in fact, based on science. Men put this to me with the greatest assurance, and profess a pathetic surprise at the skepticism amongst men of science. There are "laws of nature," they say. Every page of a scientific work talks about them. Very good, then there must be a lawgiver. A great mind stamped these laws upon the material universe and so set it evolving.

It is a good example of the extreme weakness of all the popular arguments for the existence of God—of the way in which religious literature always lags a generation or two behind science and philosophy, and so believers are honestly unable to understand the Agnosticism of modern thinkers. The Catholic, with his First Cause and Prime Mover and Necessary Being, lingers in the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. The Protestant, with his "laws of nature," is merely clinging to fallacies of the early part of the nineteenth century.

Laws of nature, as we use the phrase in science, have not the least resemblance to human laws, and have no relation whatever to a "legislator" or a mind. We say, for instance, that there is a law of gravitation. But we do not mean that there is a code of behavior drawn up in advance which things must obey. We mean simply that things do behave consistently in certain ways. The "law," as we call it, is simply a description of their behavior.

How very shallow, some eloquent preacher or apologetic writer says! Let me ask you again to reflect that it is strange that these men should be so profound while our great men of science, who are all their lives studying the "laws of nature," very rarely believe

in this supreme legislator. You must, surely, sometimes suspect that there is something wrong with this cocksureness of the preacher and the religious writer.

There is, and it is very simple. He never—quite naturally—knows enough about science to understand fully these matters about which he speaks. A stone, let us say, always falls to the ground unless it is prevented. Why should it, unless there is a law imposed upon it? Nature acts uniformly, or consistently. But if nature is blind and unconscious, ought we not to expect things to act erratically, not uniformly?

Not in the least. It is a very poor fallacy. Consistent behavior is just what we ought to expect from blind mechanical things. A ball will roll in a straight line *unless something interferes with it.* It is will, or mind, that we might expect to act otherwise. It would be a proof of mind in nature if things at times did not act uniformly; it is precisely the contrary when we find them acting uniformly.

No, along these lines the human mind will never reach God. Many learned theologians, in fact, now give up the idea of creation, or first causes and prime movers and legislators. They look to the order, the beauty, the design in nature for proof of the existence of a great intelligence. Let us see what there is in this.

DOES EVOLUTION EXCLUDE GOD?

Here we come at once to the great question which agitates the religious world in America: Does evolution undermine or destroy the belief in God?

Let us consider it very patiently and very frankly. Certain men of science in the United States go about loudly proclaiming that evolution is quite consistent with religion. It is quite useless to try to settle the question that way. Professor Osborn and Professor Millikan have every right to tell any person whom it may interest —it does not interest me, because I know that they have never studied philosophy or religion—that they believe both in evolution and religion. But they have no right whatever to say this in the name of science; for the great majority of men of science and evolutionists do *not* believe in God.

Just a word about this "conflict of religion and science." Science as such is never concerned with religion. No branch of science deals with God or the soul or Christ. Yet there is a deadly conflict, because science tells us a large number of truths which, in the opinion of the majority of highly educated people, are inconsistent with the belief in God and the soul. Let me add again that it is mere folly to propose on that account to exclude evolution and science from the schools. The facts of history—in short, all the facts about nature and man which we now know—are just as inconsistent with religion.

In order to understand the clash, let us glance at the history of it. Atheism began long ago, in ancient Greece, and religious thinkers like Socrates worked out the argument that the order and beauty and purposiveness of nature proved the existence of a God. That controversy was suspended by Europe passing into the Dark Ages, but after the Renaissance men began to think again and the old issue returned.

Modern skepticism began with a group of men whom we call Deists. They rejected the Christian religion, but they believed in God, and they turned again to the old proofs of God's existence and developed them. Atheism was arising once more. To cut a long story short, by the middle of the nineteenth century there was a whole library of books proving that the order of the heavenly bodies, the beauty of nature, and the remarkable contrivances by means of which animals and plants maintained their lives, pointed triumphantly to the existence of a supreme intelligence and designer. Science seemed to be full of evidence for God.

Then came Charles Darwin. What a tremendous splash that quiet little man made in the religious world! Yet Darwin never attacked religion. Indeed, if he were not such a great and good man, I should say that he was rather cowardly about it. He believed sincerely in God at the time when he wrote "The Origin of Species," and, although he came some years later to reject the belief, it was difficult to get him to speak on the subject. He was a delicate and retiring man, and he looked on with some bewilderment when the brilliant Professor Huxley and my equally high-minded, if not equally gifted, friend, Professor Haeckel, proceeded to show that evolution made an end of God and the soul.

There had been evolutionists before Darwin, and Darwin's particular theory of how evolution was brought about is by no means generally accepted today; though it is not honest to represent this as a doubt about the fact of evolution itself. But Darwin's name is forever, and deservedly, associated with evolution because he put it on a very solid basis of facts and drew the attention of the world to it.

And it was at once apparent that it had a most serious bearing on religion. As I said, the religious literature of the first half of the nineteenth century was full of proofs of God's existence drawn from the remarkable structures and instincts of animals, and the wonderful adaptations of plants to their surroundings. Look how wonderfully the deep-sea fishes are adapted to life at the bottom of the sea, the desert shrubs to the scarcity of water in the desert, the Alpine flowers to the cold of the mountains, the mammals to the low temperature of the north, the reptiles to the warmth of the tropics! And so on. Every organ of every organism was as eloquent a proof of a divine artificer as the parts of a watch are of the watchmaker.

It opened up an entirely new world, it made theologians shudder, when evolutionists began to show that all these things were gradually evolved during tens of millions of years. If these structures had come into existence all of a piece, certainly we should have to admit a creator. But if they were evolved gradually, one crude form leading to another, the whole situation is changed. Unconscious nature may do, by many trials and errors, in a million years what it certainly cannot do in a year. Moreover, several theories of the way in which this evolution could be brought about naturally, without any design in advance, or any supernatural guidance, have been put forward by scientific men, and, whether you follow Darwin, Weismann, or Mendel (or De Vries, the real Mendelist leader), the effect in abolishing design is the same. All three—Darwin, Weismann and De Vries—were Agnostics.

That is how evolution undermines religion. The basis of the religious argument from design in nature is that there is no other possible explanation of the organs and instincts of animals except a divine plan drawn up in advance. No plea for the supernatural origin of anything is valid *as long as there is a possibility of a natural explanation of its origin*. Even if we do not see the explanation today, we may see it tomorrow.

It began to be frightfully difficult to find any sort of proof of the existence of God. Moreover, the argument from the supposed order and beauty of the universe was equally undermined. This "order" had been found mainly in the movements of the heavenly bodies. Today we know not only that there is a terrible amount of *disorder* in the heavens—great catastrophes or conflagrations occur frequently—but evolution gives us a perfectly natural explanation of such order as there is. No distinguished astronomer now traces "the finger of God" in the heavens; and astronomers ought to know best.

As to beauty—the beauty of flowers and birds, of shells and scenery—evolution explains it just as it explains instincts and organs. It was evolved. The argument was always very one-sided, for there is as much ugliness as beauty in nature, as much brutality and bestiality as mutual aid. We will see this later. Both are now understood, however. Nature knows nothing of order and beauty, or disorder and ugliness. It evolves without a plan. Then man develops a sense of beauty, probably as part of his sex-life, and the rose or the orchid appeals to it. We can trace their evolution, and it would now be absurd to say that the flowers were evolved in order to please man a few million years later.

Thus the entire argument of design, the greatest triumph of the theologians, fell to pieces. There have, of course, been attempts to reconstruct it, but they all contain the same fallacy. They select something that science "cannot explain" (the writers themselves never know enough about science to know whether it can be ex-

plained or not) and they then bring in God to explain it in the usual way.

Lord Balfour, who is a clever statesman and a mere novice in science, repeats the old argument with little variation. Lord Kelvin, who was a very distinguished physicist, but knew nothing about biology, was promptly snubbed by the biologists of England when he tried to find an argument for God in their science. Sir Oliver Lodge, who also is a physicist and knows nothing about biology, is disdainfully ignored by them when he tries to do the same thing. The argument for a Designer is as dead as the argument for a First Cause, a Prime Mover, a Creator, or a Legislator of the laws of nature.

It is sometimes said, especially by Sir Oliver Lodge, that the argument can be entirely changed, and restored to its full strength, by admitting that natural causes produced everything, but that God guided these natural agencies. You might, for instance, trace in science the whole series of movements, from the primitive nebula onward, which eventually produced the bee, with all its wonderful "instincts." But, says Sir Oliver Lodge, you would not see the guidance of these natural agencies by a supernatural power.

Yes, quite naturally. What Sir Oliver Lodge forgets is that he has to *prove* that there was such a guidance. He can only do this by proving that the guidance was *necessary:* that the natural agencies of evolution would not have produced the bee, as we know it, unless they were guided. I have repeatedly challenged him to prove this, and he has never done it. It cannot be done.

Moreover, this idea of "guidance" of the forces of nature, which is very popular with some, raises a score of difficulties the moment you examine it closely. How would you guide a billiard ball, without pushing it? Can a mind communicate its designs to matter, and could matter carry out such designs if they were communicated? Do the atoms in the rose know that they are working out a design? In what earthly sense can anyone conceive these atoms to be "guided"?

It is mere verbiage. These people are fond of representing the Agnostic and the scientific men as "superficial" and themselves as "profound." But just reflect for ten minutes on this idea of guidance of the forces or elements of nature! Try to work it out. You will soon find which side it is that is superficial.

And this applies in full force to what is called "creative evolution"—the theory of Professor Bergson, George Bernard Shaw and a few others. One ought almost to apologize for bringing Mr. Shaw into a serious work, and Professor Bergson has not, and never had, any support in the world of philosophy. Their theory is that, though a personal God does not exist, a sort of Vital Force works through matter and finds expression in the myriads of animals and plants and man.

This is worse than ever. A conscious personal God might vaguely be conceived as realizing a plan through matter in a way we cannot comprehend. But when you take the Vital Principle itself to be impersonal—a sort of muddle-headed God at the best—and regard this vague thing as working in conjunction with unconscious atoms to produce a peacock's tail or a palm, you feel like Alice in Wonderland.

Sometimes Theists fancy that they get rid of difficulties by sacrificing the "personality" of God. "I don't believe in a personal God, but there must be a cosmic mind," says a lawyer to me. Another calls it a Cosmic Power, another the Energy of the Universe, and so on.

Well, I should not regard an impersonal God as worth a grain of incense or a spot of ink. We could have no more emotion about it, or practical relation to it, than in the case of ether. It is not worth quarreling about. But in point of fact, many of these people do not know what personality means. It means mind or self-consciousness. And as to those who prefer to talk about a great energy, or force, or power, they are equally ignorant of the meaning of the words they use. In science, from which the words are taken, power, force, and energy are merely mental abstractions, not realities.

There is, in fine, no aspect of nature today which even suggests the existence of God. There is a very great deal in nature, as we shall see, which suggests that there is no God, no sort of God. But before we turn to consider this, let us regard man himself and see whether this highest form of existence (as positively known to us) has any characteristics which send the mind to God.

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE

The sum of what we have so far seen is that in the universe at large there is no sort of evidence of the existence of any sort of God—any sort of power or being or mind beyond or behind it.

One by one the old arguments have been discredited. There were the early philosophical arguments, the proofs of a First Cause and Prime Mover, and so on. Modern philosophy entirely rejects them, and it is the philosophers who best know their value. Then there was the order of the heavens, and modern astronomy has made an end of this argument. The idea that such beauty as there is in nature testified to a God has been equally discredited by evolution. The argument from design has been shattered in the same way.

Science gives us a natural interpretation of nature. It is very far indeed in its present stage from explaining everything, but to take some part of nature which is at present obscure and say that the hand of God must be *there* is a very poor fallacy. It is quite

obvious that our ignorance of the natural causes may be, and in view of the history of science probably is, only temporary.

A few moments' reflection will show you the fallacy of all these arguments and explain why men in their search for God have been driven by science from one department of nature to another. For such an inference to be valid, you must prove, not merely that science cannot today explain this or that phenomenon in nature, but that it will *never* furnish a natural explanation of the phenomenon, because such an explanation is impossible. Who will venture to attempt that?

No, the ordinary believer in God must in his own interest realize that popular preachers and writers deceive him: not deliberately, but owing to the limitations of their education. They use long-discredited arguments. They talk philosophy which no philosopher will admit, and science that no scientist will recognize. If you take any million believers in God, at least nine-tenths of them believe for reasons which trained thinkers regard as quite illogical, and it is merely foolish to imagine that the business man or the popular preacher or the politician can judge the value of such arguments better than the trained thinker.

Amongst the higher type of religious writers, the better educated clergy, this is sadly recognized. They do not now use the old arguments, which seem on the lips of the popular preacher to be so convincing that you feel that the Atheist must be a fool or a knave. They do not boast that they can demonstrate the existence of God. They admit that it is a delicate and difficult problem. The glory of God, which was once thought to fill the universe, is now regarded as a purely spiritual thing that is not reflected from a material universe.

Did you ever, with a friend, argue as to whether the pale delicate line low down on the far horizon was really a range of hills or a cloud? Did you ever see the northern lights quivering so faintly in the night sky that you were not quite sure in your own mind whether the light was there or not? For the most honest and learned believers in God this is now the true position of the light which was once thought to flood the universe and convince every man.

So new ways, new avenues, are tried. Some, as I said, talk only of an impersonal power; but that does not help. Some say that God is limited in power, and we shall see later that this does not help. Some say that God is "immanent" in the universe, not "transcendent" to it or outside of it; but no Church ever really said otherwise, and it is merely a new word that these Modernists have coined.

It is no use appealing to the universe in any way. It is godless. It is a great reality evolving slowly through the ages, with long portentous periods of blind clash and ferocity crowned by rela-

tively few years of civilization. Nobody, from Job onward, ever really reconciled its features with God.

New schools of theologians abandon nature and turn to man: or abandon nature generally and concentrate on its highest product and representative, man. If we cannot find the finger of God here, where shall we look for it? There may be—on general grounds I should say that there probably are—higher beings than man on other planets in other parts of the universe. Our life-story on this globe has probably some two hundred million years still to run. Other stars are older than ours, and they may have planets on which the life-story has run millions of years ahead of ours. Mars even may have—I think probably has—a more advanced race than ours.

But the highest thing in the universe which we actually know is man, and in his nature we ought to find something more suggestive of divine action than in stars or flowers. Moreover, he is so frail a being, and his nerves quiver so with pain, that a benevolent or merciful power may be expected to take especial interest in him. The star feels no shock when it enters a nebula, or approaches another star, and its entrails are torn out and flung leagues over space. The rose has no tears when it withers. Even the animal has only a very dull glow of conscious pain. But man . . . .

I am reserving for special consideration the reasons in nature and man for not believing in God—you will not grumble if I give a single section to disproofs and five to an account of what are regarded as proofs. But right here it is necessary to anticipate a little.

It is precisely in the case of man, where we ought to find divine action, that we have least trace of it. The history of man is now written without the smallest need to introduce supernatural action. Whatever has been accomplished was accomplished by man. The pre-history of man—the millions of years of primitive savagery—is even more brutally godless. The human world today, which we know so well, nowhere suggests a finger of God.

Let this wait a little. Let us take first the best that there is in man. It is in man's moral emotions, in his conscience, that theologians generally claim to find evidence of the existence of God. Whatever may be said about the moral emotions of animals—and some writers have detected the crude beginnings of a moral code amongst the higher animals—man broadly stands out from the rest of the world of life as the being with a conscience. He perceives moral law, and moral law implies a legislator. Natural laws may be mere descriptions. Moral law is a code drawn up in advance for humans to obey.

Moral law exists, and it implies a legislator. We admit it. There are modern writers—novelists, dramatists, Nietzscheans, etc. —who seem to question it, but one finds that they generally mean

that some *part* of the accepted moral code is questionable. Let us say that the race recognizes a law of justice, honor, truthfulness, honesty, temperance and kindness.

You say that God imposed this law, and that in the voice of conscience we have the faint echo of his thunder. I say that the legislator was humanity, and that the conscience of the individual is an outcome of causation. If the facts of moral life are consistent with my theory, there is no room for yours. A supernatural explanation is superfluous when a natural explanation is possible. Why? For this simple reason: if a thing which actually exists is enough to explain a phenomenon, you have not the least guarantee of the existence of something else, otherwise unknown, which you call in to explain it. It may be more poetic to regard thunder as the voice of God, but, since electricity fully explains it, you give up the idea of a God in the sky or on the mountain top.

Now every feature of the moral life is consistent with the theory that moral law is a code of behavior imposed on the individual by the community. The nature of the law, the clauses and precepts of it, points to this. Justice, honesty, and truthfulness are social laws, obviously. Social life improves in so far as they are observed, and it is disturbed in so far as they are ignored. Nothing could be clearer than that nine-tenths of the moral code represents rules of social conduct.

The evolution of morals quite confirms this. The lowest peoples of the human family have no moral ideas, as we may see, and reviewing the various tribes of savages and barbarians in succession, from the lowest level upward, we see the moral law taking shape in harmony with the needs of the expanding social life of the tribe and the nation. Religious creeds pervert the code. Local circumstances and needs shape it differently in different places. But the general development is clear. Man gradually formulates his moral or social law. Then the priests take it over and ascribe the law to a divine legislator.

It would be strange if nine-tenths of the moral code were purely human, the other tenth supernatural, yet this is, I suppose, what the argument implies. Men certainly do not need a God to teach them that justice and honesty are laws or ideals. And the different emphasis put on different clauses of the law is equally human. Lying, for instance, is (where no great harm is done) regarded as a light offense. To get drunk once in a while is not a serious matter. To get drunk habitually and ruin your family is a crime. Murder is the greatest of crimes. It is all perfectly human. It is social law.

The only difficulty is about sex-morals, and precisely on this point there is no such thing as a universal and consistent human conscience. This is, plainly, very significant.

A few weeks ago a cultivated Mexican gentleman told me that

there are parts of his country where your host offers you the companionship of his wife for the night and is offended if you decline. It was a virtue of hospitality in ancient Scotland and other places. Polygamy is quite moral in Turkey and quite immoral in America, yet even a Christian moralist like St. Augustine would allow a man to beget children by another woman if his wife was barren. There is no limit to the vagaries of conscience in the field of sex. In our own highly civilized age the most serious writers dispute the (theoretically) accepted code of virtue.

This is in perfect harmony with the view that moral law is human law, and it is quite inconsistent with the belief that an autocratic legislator framed the law. We are in an age of transition. The Christian code of conduct contained things which were purely ecclesiastical in origin. We are now trying to separate what is really moral and social law from these sectarian ideas. And the standard of most people is a social standard: Does the act do harm to others? The Golden Rule is the ultimate moral principle. Behave toward others as you wish them to behave toward you. Nothing could be more clearly social.

THE RELIGIOUS INSTINCT

What we have seen in the last section applies to every attempt to create a belief in God for practical purposes. This was admirably illustrated in the effort of H. G. Wells to establish a new conception of God a few years ago. It failed completely.

Wells had come to the conclusion that, while the world will certainly remain democratic in the political sense, progress is bound to come from a sort of aristocracy, a union of the best men and women in each country. He then imagined that these select companies would do well to have an ideal leader, and he conceived this as "God the Invisible King." He made very little attempt to prove that this Invisible King really existed. It was rather an ideal, a personification of law and duty. But I never heard of a single convert to the new religion, though its author is one of the cleverest and most influential writers in England. God is not wanted by our generation.

It is just as futile for our philosophers to imagine that, when they have shattered the bases of the popular argument for God, they can provide the mass of the people with new arguments or new conceptions of God. As I have said, hardly any thinker of our time believes any longer in the personal Deity of the Churches. None accepts the common arguments for God. But a large number of our philosophers believe in *a* God, and some of them seem to think that they may communicate their belief to people who are not philosophers.

They certainly will not, and therefore I do not propose to examine their ideas here. They are divided into two antagonistic

schools. One school follows the German philosopher Hegel, and believes in a very abstract and impersonal God, without recognizable characteristics, which they call the Absolute. It takes a large volume even to explain what they mean. On the general public the philosophy, as a critic said long ago, makes much the same impression as an elephant which is introduced to a nation which never saw one before. People are not sure which is the head and which is the tail.

The other school of philosophers, mainly an estimable group of professors at Oxford University, who are as far out of touch with the world as professors generally are, call themselves Personal Idealists. They believe in a Personal God, and they find evidence for Him in the mind of man and its ideals. The argument is very strained and almost as difficult to follow as the preceding. Evolution explains man's ideals without any metaphysics of this kind.

Then there is the very small school which is known in America as Pragmatists and in England as Humanists, and has no influence in either country. It is not the aim of this school to prove the existence of God, but some religious writers regard it as favorable to them because it does not admit the supremacy of human reason. Our beliefs, it says, are not due to reason alone. Our whole nature, even our needs and interests, enter into them.

That is largely true; but, clearly, beliefs formed in this way are more likely to be false than true. The theory does not help any man who wants to be sure that God really exists. At the most it may approve of belief in God as useful. I am concerned with those who regard it as true: it is of no use unless it is true.

No one would expect me in so short a chapter as this to give a satisfactory account of these new religious philosophies, but I give the reader just this word about them for two reasons. First, very few of these philosophers accept the personal God of the creeds, and it is quite wrong to represent them as doing so. Secondly, *none* of these philosophers—that is, remember, our most profound thinkers—admits any value in the only arguments for the existence of God which circulate amongst the general public. The believer ought to understand that clearly. Philosophy is as much against him as is science or history.

But I am mainly concerned in this section with an argument which is supposed to be philosophical in form, yet is used in popular literature. It is said that, no matter how little trace of God there is in the external world, man has a religious sense or instinct which bears witness to him.

This argument used to be put, and is still sometimes put, in the form of a unanimous testimony of the human race to the existence of God. All peoples that exist or have ever existed, it is said, believe in God.

What that would prove, if it were true, is not very clear. The

whole human race has until modern times been wrong on hundreds of things: one would almost say, wrong on all things except those which are quite obvious. Moreover, nearly the whole of the race believes in God (as I have now shown) for false reasons.

Finally, it is not true that all peoples believe in God. The lower peoples do not believe in God. The belief evolves before our eyes, and now, in the highest peoples, it is disappearing before our eyes. This supposed "consent of the whole human race" is a myth, and the inference from it is ridiculous.

Well, the new apologists say, let us take the belief in God as it actually exists. It is so widespread, so nearly universal, that there must be some instinct or special religious sense in man for perceiving the existence of God. Just as one part of a man perceives color, another hears sounds, and another feels heat or cold, so there may be a spiritual faculty for perceiving God. We may feel his presence, not infer it from nature; and many believers say that this is their experience.

In view of the collapse of all the arguments for God from the external world there is naturally a tendency to concentrate on and develop this argument. It seems safe against any advance of science. You know more about your own consciousness, you think, than the man of science does. If you feel the existence of God, how can a man of science tell you that you do not?

It sounds very simple and promising, but it leads to nothing.

The first difficulty is that the strength of this "instinct" has a remarkable relation to the degree of a man's education. Belief is strongest where education is poorest. In the better educated middle class the majority of the men have no such inner sense or belief in God. The women, who are less educated, have more religion; but the modern woman, who is getting equal education, is becoming as irreligious as man. And in the circles of highest culture, of science and philosophy, the belief is feeblest of all.

Strange, isn't it, that if God has implanted a religious instinct, a sense of his presence, in the breast of man, it should grow feebler in proportion as the head is enlightened, and should generally disappear where the knowledge is greatest? Most of us, when we were young, had this "religious sense." In proportion as we grow in wisdom, it fades out of existence. I have not an atom of this religious instinct today. Why have you?

Two-thirds of the leading men of science and historians do not believe in God. Two-thirds of the younger pupils in their colleges do. Why is the religious sense distributed in this curious way? No one, surely, will suggest that the elderly professors are so dissipated that the internal mirror of their religious sense is tarnished, and the young undergraduates are so refined and virtuous that in them the mirror is spotless and bright.

I really cannot help being a little sarcastic at times when I write

on some of these arguments for the existence of God. Perhaps you think that I misunderstand or misrepresent the argument. Certainly not. Learned clergymen, amongst whom I have many friends, assure me that they rely no longer on arguments from design and First Causes, and so on. They appeal to the inner religious sense or instinct. You can read this in any quite modern religious work. And this religious sense—that is to say, the belief in God which expresses it—is certainly distributed in the curious way I have described. The more educated we are, the higher the proportion of unbelievers. The more the world grows in wisdom, the less belief in God there is.

It is surely plain that this so-called religious sense is, like conscience, an outcome of education and environment. There are four "faculties" or powers or senses or instincts in man from which one or other theologian has tried to deduce the existence of God. They are the intellectual, the moral, the religious, and the esthetic faculty. Let me note in passing that in modern psychology the idea of special faculties or powers or instincts is not recognized. These are only abstract ways of regarding the mind.

In regard to the intellect, some say that as the universe is "rational" and can be understood by the mind, there must be a rationality, an arrangement by mind, in the universe itself.

Bishop Gore repeats this in his recent book, "Belief in God." The book, by the way, is only one more illustration of the desperate condition in our time of the belief in God. Gore is so overwhelmed by the growth of skepticism that he declares that the belief is "dead," and he sees no immediate prospect of its revival. In the face of this dark situation—as it must seem to him—his book is really frivolous. Of its four hundred pages only about twenty are devoted to an effort to prove the existence of God! I say that this is frivolous, but the real reason is clear enough; there is no new argument for God, and Gore seems to feel that the old arguments have now little force.

He might at least have chosen some argument more plausible than this from the "rationality of the universe." Its "laws" are, as I explained, merely man's way of summing up its behavior. Its regularity of conduct is just what we expect of a being without mind or will. Its order is an outcome of an evolution. If the human mind (and whatever minds there are on other planets) were blotted out tomorrow, there is no sense whatever in which the universe could be described as rational.

As to man's esthetic sense, or sense of beauty, on which Lord Balfour builds an ingenious and amusing argument for the existence of God, it is one of the most clearly evolved of man's faculties. It is a higher degree of the dim sense of ornamentation in the blurred mind of the bower-bird. It emerged from the nebulous

material of life or mind, and it will pass away with the last dwellers on the earth. It points to nothing beyond itself.

So it is with the moral sense, as I have shown, and the religious sense. It is only the general collapse of the familiar arguments, which have sustained faith in God for two thousand years, that explains these strained efforts to find supernatural meanings in natural things.

Indeed the argument from a religious sense is even feebler than that from a moral sense. We all have a moral sense, a perception of moral distinctions and obligation, and it generally grows with one's progress in knowledge and refinement. It is just the reverse with this supposed religious sense. It decreases with knowledge and generally with refinement.

The truth is that there is no religious "sense" or "instinct." The idea that man is "eternally religious," that the child naturally develops a sentiment of religion, is against the entire experience of our age. In spite of the efforts of hundreds of thousands of ministers of religion and wealthy clerical organizations religion is disappearing. If knowledge is light, as we commonly say, one is inclined to regard religion as darkness, when one notices how consistently the advance of the one means the disappearance of the other.

The believer in God ought easily to understand why so many are now disposed to regard preachers and religious writers as not honest. They constantly use arguments which have been long discredited and are not true to the facts of life. They talk of man as "eternally religious" while they see the educated modern world surrendering religion on a phenomenal scale, and refusing to accept the new religions or versions of religion that arise. "Modernism" does not appeal to the world in spite of all the ability and energy of its apostles. The cities of the world have done with religion. The villages will have done with it tomorrow. The claim of a religious sense is a flagrant defiance of plain facts.

As to children, in whom this religious sense is supposed to dawn, the statement is easily tested. I say—modern psychologists say—that what is called religious sense is a set of ideas and emotions implanted by education. Well, take children in different environments: without religion, with little religion, and with fervent religion. The children develop religion precisely in proportion to their environment and teaching. My four children, who were taught neither religion nor anti-religion, never showed the least inclination to believe. It is the consistent experience of Agnostic families.

DISPROOFS

Must we then be Atheists? It depends on what you mean by the word. Most people who do not believe in God—and there are millions of such in any modern civilization, if they are not the

majority—do not call themselves Atheists. The word is taken to mean a denial of the existence of God, and most of us do not care to deny the existence of anything simply because it is not proved.

The few who call themselves Atheists, however, say that they merely mean that they have no belief in God. Agnostics, they say, are cowards who are afraid of the popular prejudice against Atheism. They quote a German philosopher who said that an Agnostic is "an Atheist in a silk hat." *Atheist* is from the Greek words "a" and "theos" (God), and the letter "a" is sometimes said to be "privative," not "negative." They do not deny, but they do not accept, the existence of God.

Unfortunately, the Greek particle "a" may be either negative or "privative," and from the days when the word Atheist was first coined it has meant, in the minds of the great mass of mankind, one who *denies* the existence of God. So I do not use it. I cannot prove a negative. The word Agnostic ("one who does not know") seems better. Some have used it in the sense that the human mind is so constituted that it *cannot* know. That is a theory, and I do not share it. I mean, in calling myself Agnostic, simply that the existence of God—any God—is not proved. And, to finish with these definitions of terms, a Theist is anyone who believes in God, a Deist is one who believes in God and rejects revelation, and a Pantheist is one who believes that God is not a separate reality from the universe.

But it must be clearly understood, when we use the word Agnostic, that we do not mean that it is quite an open question whether there is a God or not. There is no respectable evidence whatever for God, and there is a mass of evidence which disposes us to believe that there is no God. The case for Theism is very feeble: the case for Atheism is very strong.

Let us, so to say, put all the evidence on this great question in two scales. Let us imagine God, if you like, using a divine balance to weigh the evidence for and against his existence, as it is found in the minds of men after two thousand years of controversy.

In one scale he puts all the affirmative arguments. He drops in, with a smile, the ancient arguments of Plato and Socrates and Aristotle. He adds the antiquated arguments of the Christian Fathers and Schoolmen, of St. Augustine and St. Anselm, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventura. Still smiling, he throws in the arguments of the Deists, of Paley, of Kant, of Fiske, of all the poets and philosophers of the nineteenth century. And I imagine that he still smiles when he finally puts in the arguments of Professor Bergson and Professor Eucken, and of the Absolute Idealists and the Personal Idealists, of Kelvin and Lodge, of Osborn and Millikan. There is not much in the crowded scale except mutual contradiction.

What is there for the other scale? All the tears and blood that

these poor children of men have ever shed; all the pain and disease and suffering that have darkened this planet; all the brutality and injustice ever perpetrated; all the blunders and crimes that wisdom might have prevented.

The Modernist preacher and the religious scientist say sometimes that evolution is a more impressive revelation of God's power and glory than creation. How soothing nice phrases can be! You will admit that the earth today looks rather godless. I have lately seen the poor shivering in the zero weather of Chicago and Minneapolis and Winnipeg. I have seen the seamy side of life in San Francisco and Los Angeles. I have seen the poor of Mexico wresting a pittance from the soil and shuddering under a threat of a new revolution. I read of impending war between Chile and Peru. I hear of Europe still laboring in the heavy seas of post-war time and meditating new wars. I glance with pity and wonder at the daily news-sheet of crime, brutality, death, suffering, stupidity, hatred, exploitation, privation and indifference. If I were God . . .

It is bad enough. But I know history, and I know that it is better today than it ever was before. Six thousand years of tears and blood! That was bad enough. It has left us a legacy of violence and stupidity that we shall take time to erase. And now, it seems, it was not six thousand years, but at least *six million* years of human life at the lowest and most brutal level; and, before that, six hundred million years—to count only from the dawn of consciousness—of animal savagery. This is supposed to be a grander revelation of God than if the carnage had lasted only six thousand years!

And the machinery designed to effect this evolution, from this new Theistic point of view, is not less revolting. There is no "law of evolution." Living things do not go on evolving if you leave them alone. They change little as long as they remain happily adapted to their environment.

In my debates with the leaders of the Fundamentalists I was amused when they quoted as evidence against evolution the fact that large classes of animals make no progress whatever. Of course not. Why should they? They are adapted to their environment. They change only when there is some stimulating change in their surroundings; new enemies, new parasites, new dangers, new catastrophes—fresh pain and blood and death. Great changes of climate, Ice Ages, have been a most important part of the machinery of evolution. They led to very great advances, and, incidentally, they caused prodigious suffering and slaughter.

One of the "religious" scientists of America—there are fifteen, I believe—has written a learned book on the miscroscopic animals on which he is an authority. Because the organs of some of them are very ingeniously constructed, he puts on the title-page of his book an old German motto which I may translate:

Peruse this book and from it see
God's greatness in all things that be.

And amongst the "things" which he then describes are the germs of all sorts of loathsome and frightful diseases (syphilis, typhus, tuberculosis, etc.), and other parasites. How God must have smiled.

I do not know how many thousand types of parasites and carnivores there are in nature. I am at the moment a thousand miles out at sea. But does the number matter? From Pole to Equator every living thing has innumerable parasitic and carnivorous enemies. The earth is, and has been for hundreds of millions of years, a battlefield. Such is the carnage, even in modern times, that I have lately heard a surgeon claim that during those four terrible years in Europe, 1914-1918, more lives were saved, compared with previous years, than were wasted on the battlefields.

And we are now humane. We humans have improved the scheme of creation, or creative evolution. A hundred years ago more than one-half of the babes which mothers brought into the world, in pain and travail, never reached the age of twenty. Before that it was even worse. It took the human population of a country four centuries to double: now it would, if there were no birth-control, double in a quarter of a century.

Yes, you know it, you say. It has troubled religious thinkers ever since the doctrine of an infinitely powerful God was formulated. Hardly a single great Christian writer has failed to confront this "problem of the existence of evil."

Very good. What have they said about it? Can you recall any serious solution of it that you ever heard? Suffering chastens the soul and improves character, say some. Is that your experience? In very few cases indeed of the millions of human beings does pain or affliction ever improve character. The excuse is frivolous.

But if we bear our cross properly, there is heaven for us, you say. Again, to what proportion of the human race does that apply? If the idea of heaven is an illusion, the entire argument is vicious. But even if there were a heaven, the excuse would cover only a small part of the pain of the world. It does not touch the entire animal world. Why were they created at all if it be a necessity of their lives that hunger shall drive them to seek food and that one-half shall hunt and rend and devour the other half?

Moreover, the argument does not even apply to the human family. If the accepted version of the conditions of admission into heaven be true, the part of the race which suffers most—the majority—will never enter heaven. Of all the men who lived before Christ, during many millions of years, you will expect to meet very few in Paradise; and their brothers, the lower races of today, will not be more fortunate. Of the civilized nations of today the least religious are the poorer workers of our cities, and it is they who

suffer most. The elect, who will wear crowns, are oil-magnates and stock-dealers who gave millions for clerical charities, the comfortable dames of Fifth Avenue, the sheltered and not ill-fed clergy, and so on. Suffering does not generally purchase heaven. It is usually a foretaste of hell.

What other justification of the ways of God will you attempt? Nothing new has been discovered since the days of Job. It is a mystery.

Yes, it is a mystery if you believe in God. It is no mystery in our modern philosophy of life. Nature is unconscious. Out of its dark womb a dull glow of consciousness at last emerges, and living things begin to suffer. But mother-nature knows nothing of their sufferings. At last man appears. Still for millions of years he does not differ essentially from other animals. He has no large plans. He knows little of the world about him. He foresees no future. At last self-conscious, civilized man appears, and science is evolved. Then, with a fire of idealism in his heart, with the great powers of the material world at his service, he begins to right the wrongs and blunders which are a legacy from the less wise past. Is that philosophy not true to the facts of life as you know them?

"The only excuse for God is that he does not exist," said a witty and wicked Frenchman of the last century. In a sense Henri Beyle's stinging phrase is a platitude. If God did exist, could you find an excuse for him? No one has yet done it.

But they are trying again, and we must consider what they say. How one grows weary of following these changes of religious thought and argument! The supposed "constant changes of science" (which are really, for the most part, developments of what we already knew) are slight in comparison with the changes in theology, and science claims no divine inspirer who might be assumed to have an interest in guarding the race from error.

The latest plea is that, after all, perhaps God is not infinite in power. Perhaps there are limits to what he can do. Perhaps he could not prevent the pain and evil in the world. We save his benevolence, at the cost of his omnipotence.

Do we? The truth is that this theory, which was adopted by John Stuart Mill long ago, and is now favored by Sir Oliver Lodge and others, leaves us in a state of mind of the outmost confusion. What proof do you offer of the existence of this finite God? (English wits called it, when Mill introduced it, a "limited liability God.") The order and purposivness of the universe, as usual. The finite God is, if not the creator, at least the designer of the universe, the mind guiding the forces of nature.

Very well. Then he directed the forces of life to produce the germs of typhus and cholera, the teeth of the sabertooth tiger and of the twenty-foot sharks of long ago, the lust for blood of the lion and the wolf, the spider and the serpent. If he did not, why

do you claim that he paints the sunset and the orchid, shapes the beautiful shell, or fashions the human eye? You want to leave the simplest microbes (when they are pernicious) entirely out of the list of things which he guided the forces of nature to produce and to include in that list the fashioning of such complex things as the human brain and heart. Nay, you want to ascribe to your finite God all the good impulses of the mind and heart and leave all the bad impulses as things which his limited power could not control.

Certainly a naïve proposal to make to us! It is like saying that all the good things in nature clearly require an intelligent principle to explain them, and all evil things, which are just as intricate, do not require one.

But perhaps you would like to help out the argument with the hackneyed phrase that evil is only negative. So when your nerves tingle with the pain of toothache or headache or appendicitis, the sensation is merely "the absence of good." The teeth and claws of the lion are as negative as the pain of the deer, perhaps. The toxins which poisonous microbes put in the blood are negative, and, of course, death is only the cessation of life. Poverty is only the absence of wealth. And so on.

Try again, my friend. I feel sure that you have a heart. Face the facts candidly. This world contains a mass of evidence that it was probably not designed by a God, and there is no serious evidence that it was.

But there is another new apology for God, and it is very proud of itself, because it is actually based upon evolution. We admit, it says, that there have been hundreds of millions of years of pain and brutality. We admit that the finger of God is not very obvious in the world today. But a brighter age is coming. A far higher race and better earth will yet appear. The dark tragedy of the past will be crowned by a glorious final scene.

Yes, I believe it. On evolutionary principles it is certain. We are only just learning the elements of civilization. We shall rise as high above the life of today as it is above the life of the ape.

But the idea that a few million years of happiness at the close justify a process of evolution (if it was consciously guided) which entailed hundreds of millions of years of misery for beings that die before the happiness begins is one of the most flagrant applications I ever read of the pernicious principle that the end justifies the means.

An English writer, H. Mallock, damned this argument twenty years ago. "Whatever be God's future, we shall never forget his past," he said.

Let us take it soberly. There seems to be nothing in the whole of nature which now seriously persuades us to believe that a God must have made it. Our telescopes sweep out over a million

billion miles of space, and we find no more evidence than we do about us. On the other hand, there is a vast amount in nature that favors Atheism. It is the same with man. Nothing in his nature compels us to assume that the evolutionary agencies which developed him were guided. His imperfections, his age-long brutality, suggests that they were not guided. It is the same with his history. There is no finger of God in it from the first page to the last. His blundering, evolving intelligence and ideals account for everything, the good and the evil. In the long, torturous, blood-stained process of the evolution of his religions there is no more trace of divine wisdom than elsewhere.

CHAPTER VI

The Human Origin of Morals

Theories of Moral Law—Evolution and Morals—Religion and Morals—Moral Eccentricities—The Christian Ethic

Theories of Moral Law

THERE are few subjects on which so much solemn nonsense has been written as on the nature of conscience and moral law; and there is no other phenomenon of the human mind of which it is possible to give so simple and natural an explanation.

There are few facts of human life which have been so deeply woven into the web of religious thought as what are called a man's moral and immoral actions; and there are none which have so little real connection with religion.

There is no other element of our decaying religions which has been so reverently clothed by modern philosophers with a mantle of mysticism; and there is none which evolutionary science explains more clearly.

There is nothing which so readily brings together our modern oracles, inside and outside of the Churches, our preachers and essayists and editorial writers, as zeal for the august and eternal authority of moral sentiment; and there is nothing that has been more persistently assailed and more caustically ridiculed by a large number of the most brilliant literary men of our time.

There is no institution of the past that so universally commands the lip-homage of our skeptical and rebellious generation as well as of believers; and there is nothing in human history which has caused, and causes today, as much hypocrisy.

Clearly, we need a discussion of the nature of morality. We have seen what religion is, and how it evolved. We have examined the fundamental doctrines of God and immortality. Let us now, in the same plain and candid way, examine what seems to be the common ground of all idealism, the moral sentiment.

I begin, as usual, with facts. No one will question the universal, never-ending concern about morals in our press and literature as well as our churches; and few are likely to question the enormously widespread hypocrisy in practice. No one will question that a number of brilliant writers are anti-moralists, while most writers represent moral law as the supreme reality, the foundation

of social life; the starry heavens above our head, as Kant said, the granite substratum under the soil of our cities, as Emerson said. And if any do not know the mysticism with which philosophers veil the moral law, or the ease with which science explains it, he will soon be informed.

This extraordinary confusion of thought is not so surprising as the reader may be inclined to imagine. It will, in fact, be most useful to understand the confusion itself before we go further.

Think of the evolution of man's ideas in regard to thunder and lightning. To the blurred mind of primitive man, as in the blurred mind of a dog, these are simple facts. They occur. When man began to see that events have causes, and to believe that the causes in nature were spirits, he very promptly made a god of thunder and lightning. And it was a very great god: the sky-god, mountain-god, thunder-god of nature-religions.

When the higher religions made God spiritual, they still maintained that thunder was his voice, in a special way, and lightning his weapon. Even the simple explanation given by Franklin did not destroy the belief. In the law of civilized nations today it is an "act of God" when lightning shatters a building; even if it kills innocent children.

Moral law was another kind of thunder, and, being "spiritual," it remained a sort of supernatural phenomenon even when man became fully civilized. Until modern times it was quite unintelligible. There was the law, no one knew why, no one knew whence. It was written in every man's conscience. A strange thing, this, and philosophers set to work on it.

Philosophers never believe in revelation, and they do not love science. They were quite pleased when science began to explain the order of the heavens, the beauty of the rose or of the sunset, and the adaptations of organs. But science must not touch "spiritual" things, they said. That was *their* business. So the confusion goes on; and the way in which theology is still allowed to dominate our education, our law-courts, our press, and a large part of our lives, maintains the confusion in the general mind.

You will see this clearly if I very briefly sketch the history of speculation on the nature of morality.

We have so little literature of the older civilizations that we cannot say much about the ideas of their thinkers, as far as they have had any thinkers, but we have found a little Egyptian moral treatise ("The Maxims of Ptah-Hotep"), of more than four thousand years ago, which seems to show that even then educated men who were not priests understood that moral law was simply a human and social law of conduct. That was the conviction of the two great moralists, Buddha and Confucius.

However, real speculation began with the Greeks. Most of the people who talk about "brilliant Greece" and "meteoric Athens"

know very little about the subject. Earnest thinking about nature and man began amongst the Greeks, not of Athens or the homeland, but of Asia Minor.

We understand this today. The refugees of the splendid old civilization of Crete, which was destroyed by the early barbaric Greeks about 1450 B. C., went in part to Palestine, where they helped to civilize the Hebrews (who came later), and in large part to Asia Minor, where they civilized the Greek immigrants. As these Greeks of Asia Minor were independent of the religious bigotry of the homeland, they speculated with great freedom and wonderful success. They were really scientists, not philosophers. They guessed the vastness of the universe, believed in atoms and evolution, and made very little pretense of believing in gods.

As the history of thought is usually written, it is said that, fortunately, these "mere Materialists" were soon thrust aside, and the great thinkers of Athens turned away from nature and studied man.

In point of fact, it was a great misfortune; for it meant the strangling of science in its cradle. Moreover, these Greek thinkers of the homeland, while they rejected current religion, as all philosophers do, were much influenced by fear of the pious democracy; and the philosophical ideas which they gave the world instead of theology are now quite discredited.

First of them was the mystic Pythagoras. He is said to have been influenced by Buddhism. We can only say that it is a great pity that he did not introduce into Europe the Agnostic and purely humanitarian ethic of Buddha. Instead of that he discovered—I am quoting a high authority on him—that "the essence of justice is a square number." Nice motto to put up in church or a law-court! Or is that why we speak of a "square deal"?

Socrates next searched the matter, and we are told that he did not form any "theory of morals." He merely cleared up men's ideas as to what *is* just, and insisted that the moral sentiment depended upon knowledge.

Plato, who was the first sociologist as well as a great philosopher, lost his balance between his two interests. It is clear that, as a student of social life, he saw that moral law is "utilitarian," as we now say. It is social law, enforced for the good of society. But Plato also had a theory that a merely material world can produce nothing, and all truth, goodness, and beauty must come from a spiritual world or, as he said, a world of "ideas": not ideas in the mind of man, but self-existing realities. The "good" was one of these ideas, and conscience was its voice and interpreter.

Aristotle, the most learned and logical of the Greek thinkers, did not believe in Plato's ideas. No one does today. But, although Aristotle wrote the first treatise on Ethics (the science

of morality) he did not succeed in understanding the nature of moral law, and he has left us no theory of it.

By this time all Greece was speculating—and there has never been any country like it for speculation—on moral law, and there were three main opinions. There was the Platonic theory; and Christian writers followed it later, saying that the "ideas" were in the mind of God. Then there was the theory of the Stoics and some others. Although the Stoics talked politely about the gods, it is fairly clear that they did not believe in them. For them moral law was just "the Law of Nature." It existed. It was part of the scheme of things. A man was at discord with nature if he did not observe it.

The third theory was really our modern theory, or the correct theory. Probably the great early scientist and evolutionist Democritus first discovered the truth. At all events, there were soon several schools in Greece maintaining that the object and origin of moral law was simply concern for human welfare. Some, whom we call Hedonists, said that the test of a moral act was whether it promoted happiness (the Greek of which is *hedone*). Some made happiness consist mainly in pleasure. Others, like Epicurus, the last and sanest of the Greeks, though his views are nearly always misrepresented and slandered, said that moral acts were those which promoted a passionless tranquillity of life. Epicurus built on science, not philosophy, and tried to bring the world back to science.

But Greece fell, and the whole tradition of independent thinking perished. The Romans were poor thinkers, and most of them, being Agnostics, followed the Stoics or the Epicureans. Their humanitarian ideas did magnificent work for the world.

During the next thirteen or fourteen centuries moral law was simply held to be a divine command. When at last independent thinking began again, when the great Deistic movement attacked revelation, all the old ideas were revived. Some followed the Stoic theory, that moral law is the Law of Nature. Some connected it with the divine will, as revealed, not in a Bible but in man's conscience. But some (Hobbes and Locke) more or less brought out its human significance: and already some (like Mandeville) satirized it as a superstition.

At the end of the eighteenth century German philosophers began, and from that day to this some weird theories of morality have been formulated. A vast library of the subject exists, and there is neither space nor reason even to mention all the theories here.

There are two main views. One is the old idea that moral law is a sort of eternal and august reality, either in "nature" or in God or in a mystic world which nobody can understand. It is "intued" (seen directly) by the mind, and so these theories are

known as Intuitionalism. Against this a number of British thinkers (Hume, Bentham, Spencer, Mill, etc.) held that moral law is a human law regulating the welfare or "utility" of social life. These are called Utilitarians; and we shall now see how science stepped in amongst the philosophers, scattering them right and left, and proving that the Utilitarians were right.

EVOLUTION AND MORALS

The reader who is inclined to smile at the philosophers, or to wonder how the deepest thinkers of the race could wander so far astray, must face the problem as it confronted them.

Unquestionably there was in the mind of practically all men an imperious sense of moral law. Men might defy it, but they did not deny it. And it did not come from revelation, since it was just as strong among civilized people beyond the range of Christianity, or before the Christian Era. It was a great reality, and it had to be explained.

But until the idea of evolution arose again, there was no possibility of explaining it, at least fully. Some of the Greeks and the Deists could see how closely this law was related to the social interests of man. Justice, truthfulness, and self-control are obviously desirable social qualities. But there were parts of the law, like sexual purity, that seemed to have no social significance; and it was not at all clear how even the law of justice, however useful it was, came into existence. So the law was taken as a great fact, existing in the scheme of things apart from man, and "intued" by him through a special faculty which he called his "conscience."

The entire situation was changed when the truth of evolution was proved. Some writers are fond of saying that evolution describes processes, but does not explain anything. You have here a good illustration of the foolishness of that gibe at science.

Evolution said that the human race had been evolving, from the savage to the civilized level, during at least some hundreds of thousands of years. This meant two things, as far as the great problem of the origin of moral law was concerned. It meant, first, that the law may have arisen amongst, or had been formulated by, human beings themselves long before the historic civilizations arose. This would explain how the ancient civilizations simply found themselves in possession of the moral code, and could therefore not suppose that it was drawn up by men. If they themselves had not formulated it, who had?

We quite understand their difficulty. But the difficulty would have disappeared ages ago if the theory of evolution sketched by the first Greek scientists, had been retained and developed. Then the Greeks might have learned how all their religious and moral and political ideas had been gradually forged in the workshop

of experience, by a long line of developing ancestors. Evolution lit up the whole problem, and nearly every other problem.

Secondly, evolution said that the lower races of men in the world today represent the various phases of evolution through which the race has passed. Take a simple illustration from the roses on a bush. The rose in full bloom or decay certainly passed through the stages of bud and half-opened flower which you see on the bush. So the race passed at one time through the successive stages represented by the Veddah, the Australian, the Bantu, the Polynesian, and so on. Circumstances drove one branch of the race onward and kept other branches behind, at various stages of development.

If this is true, we ought to find every stage in the evolution of moral ideas and conscience in the innumerable "savage" tribes scattered over the earth.

Here again, you see, the philosophers were at a great disadvantage. They had not the slightest reason to suppose that savages could throw any light on the difficult problem they were examining. Not even the wisest of them could be expected to look in that direction. In fact, very little was known about savage tribes, still less about their ideas. Books were in circulation among the learned Greeks describing how the entrance to the lower regions was about the Rhine valley of today, and how dog-headed men and all sorts of monstrosities lived where we now find tribes whose ideas are of the greatest value to us.

So we do not smile at the older philosophers and their "theories of morality." We may be pardoned, however, for smiling at some of their modern successors, who repeat the old mysticism as if science had not altered the whole situation.

Take Professor Eucken, of Jena University, whose works on morality and religion have a large circulation in England and America. Professor Osborn in one of his works mentions Eucken as one of the German scientists who have returned to a religious view of life! Eucken knows nothing whatever about science. He is a professor of philosophy. He is one of the most popular writers of the advanced or Modernist religious school.

Now, Eucken's teachings about morality—I translated two of his books, and so I am familiar with his views—show very clearly why many philosophers and their religious readers cling to the old mystic theory, and reject the evolutionary theory, of morality.

Let us first glance at two earlier thinkers, both so famous as moralists that we can hardly omit them from a chapter on morality. One was the eighteenth-century German philosopher Kant. He was tremendously impressed with the imperiousness of conscience. It does not, he says, tell you to do this or avoid that *if* certain consequences follow your act. It dictates absolutely or

"categorically." He therefore invented the famous phrase, "the categorical imperative." God must be behind it, Kant said. And the answer is that there are no "ifs" about the moral impulse simply because men had, largely under the influence of religion, actually forgotten that it was their own race which laid down the law, and why it laid down the law! It had become a peremptory command, enforced by education.

The second moralist is Emerson who, though he does not see a personal God behind the moral law—these "inner senses" never tell two men the same thing—thinks it quite as categorical as Kant did. It is an eternal and commanding law, and so on. That is the chief weakness of Emerson's fine writings. Carlyle has the same weakness. There is no such categorical and eternal law. There are simply rules of conduct, obviously of a social significance, which society impresses upon every child, man, and woman; and there is a good deal of uncertainty about them.

Rudolph Eucken makes the same mistake. He starts, he says, from "the facts of the moral life." You soon see that he means only the facts of his own very strict moral life and delicate conscience. Of the phenomena of moral consciousness in the race at large he knows nothing. Of the revolt of sincere modern thinkers against moral codes he can give no sensible explanation. He lives in a hot-house, and then thinks he can tell us the normal temperature in which the rest of us live. And this applies to the Felix Adlers and other ethical philosophers who tell America what to think about moral law. I ought to add that the English philosopher, Professor Carveth Read, has written a much more sensible book ("Natural and Social Morals") on the lines of Evolution.

Evolution has made all this mysticism superfluous; and it is the only explanation of moral law in which you can put any confidence, because it is the only theory which takes into account *all* the facts of moral life.

Since the days of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer our knowledge of savage ideas has grown enormously. In such a work as Professor E. A. Westermarck's "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas" (2 vols.), which is the greatest recent scientific study of ethics, you have the moral ideas and practices of all the backward fragments of the human race.

All the fine theories of philosophers break down before this vast collection of facts. There is no intuition whatever of an august and eternal law; and the less God is brought into connection with these pitiful blunders and often monstrous perversions of the moral sense the better. What we see is just man's mind in possession of the idea that his conduct must be regulated by law, and clumsily working out the correct application of that idea as his intelligence grows and his social life becomes more complex. It is not a question of the mind of the savage imperfectly seeing the

law. It is a plain case of the ideas of the savage reflecting and changing with his environment and the interests of his priests.

The philosophers do not even explain, or candidly confront, all the facts of the moral life of civilized people. One of the most striking features of normal moral ideas is that the approval or censure of an act is overwhelmingly proportionate to the social value or social injury of the act. Wherever religion or superstition has perverted the conscience, you may get very extraordinary notions of sin: amongst the different castes of Hindus, for instance, and amongst savages. You get mortally serious rules about washing, sneezing, coughing, excreting, wearing hats, and so on. But in proportion as men rise toward a rational order—an order prescribed by rational consideration only, not by blind subservience to tradition—the ideas of the moral and immoral come to coincide more and more with human and social interests.

Why is justice the fundamental and essential moral law? It is a vital regulation of *social* life. Why is murder the greatest crime? It is the gravest *social* delinquency. And so on. It would be a remarkable coincidence if this mystic law of the philosophers and the theologians, existing before man existed, and surviving when he disappears, just happened to agree so well with the social interests of the observers of the law themselves!

RELIGION AND MORALS

For a hundred years, ever since men of science began to take an interest in the curious tales of travelers, it has been disputed whether such and such tribes have any moral or religious ideas. The uncertainty was due in part to unskilfulness in the observer. Very often he made no allowance for possible influences of missionaries, who are apt to put their creed in the black man's childish language and he reproduces bits of it in his legends. Often, again, the observer of the tribes, especially if he is a missionary, asks the natives if they are conscious of "sin" and "duty" and "remorse" and "God"; and, since they have not even words for such things, he bluntly says that they have no religion and no morals.

The whole literature upon which we draw for our knowledge of the religious and moral ideas of lower races is full of these contradictions. Lord Avebury ("Origin of Civilization"—one of the first works on these lines) concluded generally that savages have "no moral feeling"; and his "savages" were, as usual, a medley of tribes at all levels of culture. One writer says: "The Reashin has no moral sense whatever; whereas it is well known that the Indian's code was high." The Hottentots in particular, and blacks in general, are said to have "no moral sense"; but a high authority tells us that "the strictness and celerity of Hottenot justice are things in which they outshine all Christians," and another says

that "one of the most marked characteristics of black people is their keen perception of justice."

One authority says that the Tonga Islanders (a high race) have "no words essentially expressive of . . . vice, injustice, and cruelty"; and another says that they "firmly believe that the gods approve of virtue and are displeased with vice." I could extend the list indefinitely.

But the man who studies morality in the light of evolution is not troubled by these verbal contradictions. They are just what he expects to find. Ask three travelers to a certain region whether the natives have government, shops, churches or art. One will say "no," one "yes," and the third "a sort of government," etc. We more advanced peoples attach meanings to our words which do not apply to the corresponding culture of the natives. It is entirely in harmony with evolution. In Australia the highest authorities on the natives have assured me that they have "no religion and no morals"; and they have then assured me that the natives have an elaborate belief in spirits, especially the spirits of certain remote and very powerful ancestors, and a relatively high code of character.

It is religion and morals in the making. It is, from first to last, a massive testimony to evolution. Everything in the world testifies to it. Everything in the world is illumined by it.

Hence we cannot expect to put our finger on a point in the history of the race and say: Here religion begins, there morality begins. They rise gradually, with a long dawn. Peoples who do not even believe in spirits—and there are some—clearly have no religion; but at what precise point the belief in the shadow becomes religion no sensible man will try to say.

It is the same with morality. The lowest peoples have nothing corresponding to conscience or a conscious code of conduct, but they more or less automatically follow a code. At a higher level of intelligence they are conscious of a code, but it is merely "custom." At a still higher level the spirits of the dead are said to be just as interested as the living community in the observance of this code. Religion and morality enter into combination.

They arose independently, from quite different roots. No modern authority questions it. And they remained independent for some time. Of the Bambala of the Congo an authority says: "There is no belief that the gods of spirits punish wrong-doing." Sir E. F. Im Thurn, the great authority on the Indians of Guiana, says that they have an "admirable" code of conduct and an elaborate Animistic religion, but there is "absolutely no connection" between the two. An authority says of the Comanche Indians: "No individual action is considered a crime, but every man acts for himself according to his own judgment, unless some superior power should exercise authority over him." Another says of the American

Indian generally: "In his conception of a God the idea of moral good has no part."

Such quotations will be found by the score in Westermarck's book, from which (unless a reference is given) I borrow them. But if we are equipped with the evolutionary theory, we shall look carefully for the germ of the higher growth even at the lower level; and we shall always find it. Morality and religion gradually, and in large part naturally, blend.

The second element of the evolution of religion, the deification of the more striking parts of nature, which gave religion its great gods, was much slower in blending with morality. These big spirits did wonderful things, and were admired at a distance. But there was always a tendency in some of them to become moral deities, because they could do so much harm or withhold so much good. The moon, a very popular early god or goddess, did no particular good or harm. But the sun was a terrible tyrant in the tropics. The sky might cause a drought by refusing rain or might send thunder and lightning. The water-god might cause floods. The fire-god burned houses. The wind-god sent destructive hurricanes. And so on.

Chiefly, however, it was the deified ancestors, not the nature-gods, who were concerned with the observance of custom. They had made the customs. They took an interest in them. And, although Herbert Spencer and Grant Allen were wrong in thinking that ancestor-worship was almost the only source of the making of gods, very many were made that way. Even great gods of the historic religion, like the Osiris of the Egyptians, are believed to have been ancestors. The Romans deified their Emperors. The Christians deified Christ, and the later Buddhists made a god of Buddha.

Now in the blending of tribes into kingdoms, when it was necessary for the rival priesthoods to adjust their deities, ancestor-gods were often fused with old nature-gods. Osiris was blended with an old sun-god. These wise deified old ancestors were particularly interested in proper conduct, and Osiris became in time the judge of the dead. The wicked were seen to flourish in this life. Very well, said the priests, they will get it in the next: which happens to be a good deal longer. So we find nature-gods turning ethical. Even Jupiter and Zeus were guardians of justice. They were the sky-gods, the dispensers of rain and sunshine, the fathers of all men.

Yet Zeus-Jupiter-Dyans-Thor (the old sky-god of the Aryans) was believed to have had not the slightest regard for sex-rules; and there we come to a new and interesting chapter in the evolution of morals. Many of the nature-gods had, as I said, a natural tendency to become ethical. They sent rain or sunshine or fertility; they caused drought, fires, storms, and floods. One had to gratify them by observing the rules. And one of the most impor-

tant of all, when men learned agriculture, was the goddess (in a few places god) of fertility. The spirit of mother-earth was even more important than that of father-sky.

But, quite naturally, the fertility of the earth became closely connected with a woman's fertility. At first human beings copulated like cattle, not even knowing—the Australians did not know it—that the man begot the child. In time love and fertility became one of the mightiest facts of life in the mind of men. The most tremendous force, the most beneficent thing, in the world was the spirit of sex-pleasure. This gave a twist to the primitive moral rules; and, as the spirit of war just as naturally became deified at the same time, another grave perversion of the humanitarian code of conduct, as we understand it, occurred in moral evolution. These and other eccentricities we will now show to be a normal part of the evolution of conscience.

MORAL ECCENTRICITIES

Preachers still shudderingly refer to one of the "abominations" of ancient Babylon. They tell how the women had to go to the temple and have commerce with a man before they could marry; how little crowds of the less pretty women might be seen at the door soliciting the interest of casual sailors and other men of little taste and much feeling. As Frazer strangely repeats this in his "Golden Bough," there is some excuse for the preacher. But we now know that it is an entire falsification of life in the city of Babylon. There were, however, temples (and probably an old one in Babylonia) where this was done, and where there were sacred prostitutes.

From the last part of the last section the reader will now begin to have an idea of the meaning of this strange perversion of religion and ethics. These were relics of the middle stage of man's religious evolution. The spirit of generation, in man and in nature, was just as likely to be deified as the sun and moon. The act of generation then became in a sense a religious act. The god or goddess was interested in its happening, not in its prohibition.

Moreover, it was socially a very desirable thing. The army wanted men: the men wanted wives and slaves. Disease and war wrought terrible havoc, and population was urgently needed. The development of polygamy, which is not a primitive institution, was scarcely enough. Concubines were allowed. It suited the masculine nature.

On the other hand, it came to be believed that human copulation could influence the fertility of the earth, by a sort of sympathetic magic. When scientific men find drawings of deer in a prehistoric cavern, they tell the whole world: it was magic. The artist believed he could bring the animals nearer and have a profitable hunt. When the same scientific men find a drawing of a male organ,

or a woman with an exaggerated pubic part carved out of a bit of mammoth's tusk, they say: "How naughty," and shut it away. Why not the same magic?

At all events it is certain—the belief and practices based upon it lingered in Europe in the Middle Ages—that men came to believe that by human generation they prompted the fertility of mother earth. This easily led to what we call license or promiscuity. The great nature-festivals were marked by orgies of sex-pleasure; especially as there was prodigious eating and drinking. Priests of the goddess discovered, to their advantage, that it was particularly fortunate for women to have commerce with them. Priestesses were not likely to avoid the act of which their goddess was the presiding genius. Large carvings of the sex-organs stood unblushingly in the temples: until Englishmen and Americans came along in the nineteenth century.

Just as natural and intelligible—that is to say, from the evolutionary point of view, *and no other*—is another very large category of perversions of conscience which, perhaps, are the greatest causes of people's contempt of their lowly relatives. In science "savage" means a being at a low stage of intellect and culture. To the general public it means a blood-thirsty, cruel scalp-seeking or head-hunting monster.

Savagery in this sense is not a primitive quality of man. Those lowest fragments of the human race to which I have often referred are not at all "savage." The Tasmanians, it is true, were so wicked as to fight for their land when Europeans wanted it. The Maoris, Red Indians, and others were equally wicked. But at the most primitive level man is peaceful and honest.

At that level man is neither a hunter (except in a very small way) nor an agriculturist. He has no "tribes." The development of hunting gave man a taste for blood, and the crystallizing of human groups into distinct tribes, with rival hunting grounds, gave men a great taste for each other's blood. The peaceful Yahgan type was succeeded by the less peaceful (but not bad) Australian type, and this by the fierce South American Indian, the Dyak head-hunter, the Fiji cannibal, the terrible Zulu, and so on.

Under this heading I must not quote. The list would be endless. But you see the principle. Tribal organization and hunting involve conflicts about encroachments on each other's grounds or areas. Conflicts lead to wars. "Savagery" becomes a social quality. The tribe, in self-defense, wants fierce and ruthless warriors. Spies and prisoners must be tortured and killed. The world begins to run with blood. And since conscience is the interpreter of custom, of the interests of the tribe, it sanctions everything.

The growth of society while man is still so imperfect helps this. Men accumulate "property," and other men steal it. A prettily carved stick or a deadly spear tempts a neighbor. With the growth

of Animism, these things are believed to have "medicine" or "manu" or some supernatural force. A man can't make *that*. He steals it. And, as justice is still slow and imperfect, the victim retaliates. Murder is more common, and murder leads to blood-feuds, all over the earth. Revenge becomes a terrible and legitimate passion (as there is no electric chair).

Here religion or superstition enters, and makes things worse. One great root of these moral eccentricities is that the spirit of the murdered man has to be appeased. It may, otherwise, make itself very unpleasant. The murderer must die, if he can be found; if not, somebody belonging to him must die. In fact, the Loucheux Indians used to lacerate *themselves* after a funeral, to appease the spirit of the dead man. Some of the California Indians would kill the murderer's best friend, not the murderer, on the idea that it inflicted more pain. The Maoris, Aetas, and others would, after a murder, go out and kill the first man they met. Others would kill the first animal they met. Thousands of such aberrations of conscience are easily understood.

But graver evil is done, and worse eccentricities arise, by the transfer of the care of law from living society to the spirits. I do not envy the man who some day will try to answer the question: Has religion done more good or harm to the race? Believe me, it will require a ledger as large as the "Encyclopedia Britannica." Let me give here one illustration out of hundreds.

The spirits or gods, who are gradually credited with concern for conduct, are the counterparts of living men. Heaven is always a feeble reflection of earth: of the hunting grounds of the Indian, the harem of the Asiatic, or the dull intellectual world of the Christian philosopher. In the early stages the active spirits or demi-gods are even worse than men. They are generally devils. At the best, they follow the character of living humanity. Man smites the offender or, if he cannot find him, smites his wife, children, and relatives. Then he smites the family and relatives as well as the man. He visits the sins of the father on the children and on all his kin.

He comes to believe that this is just; and the priests approve it everywhere. In early Chinese law all male relatives of an offender were responsible. The Catholic Inquisition wrought terrible harm to the families of heretics: and for sordid reasons. Mexican law enslaved the children of a traitor to the fourth generation. Athenian law—law generally, in fact—banished the family with the father. Plato and Confucius were the first to condemn this principle.

It was a ghastly stage in the evolution of thought when this was transferred to the gods. Very early it led to human sacrifices. "Off with his head" was the refrain constantly on the lips of kings; and the spiritual kings were believed to be just as bloodthirsty. Somebody had to die to appease them. The larger the number of

victims, the more the gods would smile. Thousands of victims in a day were sometimes ripped open in Mexico. In ancient Europe and nearly all over the earth the gods' altars stank with human blood.

The advance of humanity—the reform never came from the priests—led to some curious modifications of this. In Peru, where the priests wanted the blood of children for the sacrament, they were in the end only permitted to punch the children's noses. In ancient Rome dolls were strung on little trees at mid-winter instead of the old human sacrifices. In China paper images of men were burned. Generally, animals were substituted for men; but there was a peculiar development in the "scapegoat."

Sin began to be treated as a sort of unpleasant commodity that you could unload on some other person; just as an Arab will bend down when you are cursing him and let the curse fly over his head. That was in part the meaning of the human sacrifice. And as the gods wanted something good, not any shabby old thing, kings and kings' sons and daughters had to die. This, in conjunction with another idea which we see elsewhere, led to "sons of God" taking the sins of the world upon themselves.

But every variety of scapegoat is known. The Hebrews ("Leviticus, XVI") had the childish idea that they could unload the sins of the people upon a goat, which was driven into the wilderness. The "inspiration" was quite common. The Maoris transferred their annual accumulation of sins to a fern, which floated on the river out to sea. The Badagas of India prefer a calf, which is driven into the jungle (and is probably happy ever afterwards). The Egyptians chose a bull. The Iroquois Indians transferred all the sins of the tribe once a year to a white dog, which they (more prudently) burned. The Peruvians washed their sins off in the river, as the Hindus do in the Ganges today, and the spiritual animalcula were supposed to float out to sea.

Much less amusing was the development in the direction with which we are more familiar. Where there was only a very dim idea about the future life, the prosperity of the wicked was always a terrible problem. Why Shamash, or Jupiter, or Zeus, or Jahveh, permitted so much injustice, no one could say; for the Babylonians, Romans, Greeks, and Hebrews had no definite ideas of the life beyond the grave. Other peoples had no problem. They invented hell. Their gods would pass the record of the most ferocious torturing kings that had ever been. They would keep their victims alive for all eternity and torture them all the time.

I am not concerned here with the agony that this awful belief has caused, or with the religious persecutions, witch-burnings, and Inquisitions it inspired. I am noting it as one of the most awful aberrations of man's moral instinct under the influence of religion.

It so got into the blood of men that people who considered themselves highly intellectual and refined in modern times could see no harm in it. Gladstone and Roosevelt believed in hell! (I tried hard to think of two other eminent men *not* politicians or theologians, but could not.)

And another aberration of the moral sense under the influence of superstition was cannibalism. No doubt it was sometimes due to primitive lack of humanity, sometimes to economic pressure (as the killing of the aged often is), but it was very largely "sacramental." You got the strength or virtue of the eaten man. This led, in mystic ways, to the rather common religious practice of eating the god, or communion; though there is another root to this, as we shall see. Head-hunting was another perversion inspired by religious beliefs.

Probably the largest and most eccentric moral aberrations were due to religion in precisely the field where it claims its highest service.

One great human tendency which we have seen made for sex license. There were others, however, which made for the restriction of sex. The menstrual trouble of women was one. They were periodically "unclean." In childbirth, the superior male thought, they were again unclean. All sorts of tabus grew up, and the sex act began, over large areas, to be regarded with suspicion. Priests and priestesses were forbidden it. Sacred seasons were not to be contaminated with it. Men and women began to believe that one became wonderfully wise and enlightened if one avoided copulation; and others became wonderfully holy. Out of it all arose, also, the contempt of woman, of which Egypt and Babylon knew nothing.

THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC

It is difficult to see how any man or woman, knowing even the few facts which it is possible to give here, can doubt the modern theory of moral evolution. We are not taking a few bones of prehistoric man and guessing how he lived. It is there, all over the earth, today. Religion and morals, and the combination of the two or ethical religion, are actually in the human workshop, being made. We more advanced workers have finished the job and are watching the apprentices.

Yes, you may say (with a sigh), it was a natural evolution: unguided, wasteful, replete with the folly of childhood, dark with the awful impulses of the real savage. But the time came. Revelation of a holier law broke gradually upon this world. God made himself known to one or two peoples—why to one or two, or so late, we don't know—and bade them purify the conscience of the world. Stumbling man was taken by the hand and led—at last.

This is as false as the idea that God created man and watched

over him. Nothing new or original appeared in Judea. Monotheism was already known. An ethic higher than that of the Hebrew prophets already existed.

Even while I am writing this, in the heart of London, the papers tell that an English clergyman is in terrible difficulties with his flock, because he declines to read certain Psalms in church. You can guess which Psalms—those about dashing the heads of little children on the stones, and so on; and these Psalms were written quite late in the history of Judea! And the English congregation rises in wrath, and says that these things *shall* be regarded as the Word of God! Nothing miraculous or new or puzzling happened when Christ appeared. The stream of natural moral evolution just flowed on.

I do not say "stood still," remember. It was flowing all the time. In the year 1 A. D. it ought to be much further than in the year 1000 B. C. There would be no great miracle if the world were more enlightened in 500 A. D. than in 500 B. C. It was a thousand years older, and three great civilizations had meantime added to man's heritage. (As a matter of fact, the world was not more enlightened in 500 A. D. than in 500 B. C.)

The only point here is to complete my story by inquiring if the new religion fits naturally into it. And instead of making a number of general statements for which the evidence cannot appear here, let us take two or three of what are commonly said to be the greatest moral innovations of Christ and Christianity.

The first is, of course, the Golden Rule. Let us take it humanly. Nobody is ever going to love his neighbor as he loves himself. It can't be done. The human emotions are not made that way. An ideal ought to be something that can be realized. But we need not worry about this. You are, of course, aware that the Golden Rule of life in this sense—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—is a quotation from the Old Testament. It is not a Christian contribution to the pretty sentiments of moralists. It was centuries old when Christ quoted it.

And as the Old Testament, as we have it, was written only late in the fifth century B. C., its doctrine of brotherly love is more than a century later than that of Buddha. Moreover, Buddha meant *universal* love. Every man was not the Jew's brother, or his neighbor. I presume you know enough about the ancient Jews to know that. The Jews never even professed to love anybody but Jews; and they hated quite a lot of those. A quarrel between Jews is something to see. But Buddha, as any work on him will tell you, demanded that every man should love his fellows as a mother—these were his words—loves her children.

Let us take the Golden Rule in its proper and more or less practical form: Act toward others as you would have them act toward

you. It is a most admirable principle. It puts the Utilitarian theory of morality in a nutshell. It is so obvious a rule of social life that one is not surprised that few ever said it. It is not profound. It is common sense. If you do not want lies told you, don't tell them. If you want just, honorable, kindly, brotherly treatment from Cyrus P. Shorthouse or James F. Longshanks, try to get it by reciprocity.

Rather a good word, is it not, reciprocity? Well, the famous and Agnostic Chinese moralist Confucius gave that as the Golden Rule six hundred years before Christ was born, and nearly two hundred years before the Old Testament, as we have it, was written!

You may shake your head, and say that you have heard that Rationalist story before. Confucius, you may say, only taught the Golden Rule in a negative form: Do not unto others what you do not want them to do to you. That statement is found in the whole of Christian literature. Christ went much farther than Confucius.

Well, presuming that you do not read Chinese, and that the translation of the Chinese classics is not available, open that most accessible of books, the "Encyclopedia Britannica" at the article "Confucius." It is written by a Christian missionary and fine Chinese scholar, Dr. Legge, and it has been available to every Christian writer for years. Dr. Legge says, quoting the expression Golden Rule: "Several times he [Confucius] gave that rule in express words: What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others."

At last a disciple asked him if he could put it in a word. He gave the composite Chinese word "reciprocity." Dr. Legge tells us that it consists of the two characters "as heart": let the impulses of your heart be the same as those you want in your neighbor's. And lest you should still insist that *perhaps* it was only negative, Dr. Legge goes on: "It has been said [it is said by nearly every other Christian writer] that he only gave the rule in a negative form, but he understood it in its positive and most comprehensive form." No Chinese scholar differs from that; and Professor Westermarck gives other sayings of Confucius to prove it.

Yet, but, you say, there is the counsel to love even one's enemies. Did any moralist in the world ever urge such a refinement of virtue before Christ?

Alas, yes, (Pardon the sigh, but I never love my enemies. I think it would be bad social policy to do so. It rather encourages the mean and unjust.) The Old Testament says: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother." Perhaps that is not conclusive, but it does not matter, as the counsel had been given quite explicitly long before.

The great Chinese sage, Lao-tse, a contemporary of Confucius and nearly as Rationalistic as Confucius, said: "Recompense injury

with kindness." That is near enough; and the doctrine seems to have been common in the humanitarian ethic of China. Later, in the fourth century B. C., we find the chief disciple of Confucius, the great moralist Mencius, who seems to have been the first in the world to condemn war, saying: "A benevolent man does not lay up anger, nor cherish resentment against his brother, but only regards him with affection and love."

There in the heart of Agnostic China, three hundred years before the Sermon on the Mount was delivered, you have the complete doctrine of loving your enemies as a commonplace of humanitarian morality.

Buddha in India taught the same doctrine. Love was to be universal, he insisted; and in the Dhammapada we read: "Hatred ceases by love: this is an old rule." It seems, in fact, to have been as common in India centuries before Christ as it was in China. In the "laws of Manu," compiled early in the Christian Era, but consisting of ancient Hindu writings, it is said: "Against an angry man let him not in return show anger: let him bless when he is cursed."

Non-Christian European moralists—Socrates and Plato, Seneca, Pliny, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius—all had the same sentiment. "We ought not to retaliate, or render evil for evil to anyone," said Socrates, quoted approvingly by Plato. Seneca wrote a whole treatise on "Anger," condemning it in every form. It is therefore not in the least surprising that, when Greek influence began to be felt in Judea, as we see in Ecclesiasticus and Proverbs, the same sentiment is reproduced. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother," was already written in Leviticus; but, as I said before, the Jew's "brother" always meant a Jew. The sentiment, however, was now so common in every school of moralists that the finer Hebrews naturally adopted it, and, through the school of the Rabbi Hillel, it passed on to the Christians.

Here, then, is a sentiment, which thousands of Christian writers have claimed to be entirely original in Christ, actually found to be a commonplace of moralists for hundreds of years before Christ and in the "pagan" world. I trust the Christian reader will see in this a striking illustration of the way in which he is misled; but I will carry the argument just one step further.

It occurred to no Christian, not even to Christ, that, if this moral sentiment is lofty, it ought pre-eminently to apply to man's conception of God. On what principle must Christ as man love his enemies, and Christ as God devise for them an eternity of fiendish torment? And, since God, the ideal, was held to punish transgressors of his law, human and ecclesiastical society everywhere continued without scruple to do so.

We realize today that this is immoral. We inflict penalties to

deter would-be transgressors, not as punishment. Who introduced this idea into the world? Plato and Aristotle. They taught the Greeks that the "punishment" of a criminal was "a moral medicine" and a deterrent. Then came Christianity, and the sentiment was lost. Punishment, as such, was more abominable than ever. At last a group of humanitarians won the reform. Who were they? Grotius (a liberal Christian or semi-Rationalist, and the least effective), and then Hobbes, Montesquieu, Beccaria, Filangiere, Feuerbach, Schopenhauer, and (above all) Bentham—all Rationalists, most of them Agnostics.

CHAPTER VII

The Forgery of the Old Testament

How We Detect the Forgery—The Priestly Forgers—The Mistakes of Moses—The Mythical History of the Jews—The Truth About the Prophets—Pious Fiction

How We Detect the Forgery

THE Word of God a forgery! I can understand the bewilderment of a religious reader, but let him consider coolly what the statement means. It does not mean that God forged a book. It means that men forged a book in his name. That can be examined dispassionately by anybody.

But, you say, they were religious men, and the charge is an insult. My dear friend, Protestant divines and preachers *unanimously* accuse, not merely religious men, but ministers of the Christian Gospel of hundreds of forgeries.

You never heard of it? Why, they hold—and quite rightly—that almost all of the stories of saints and martyrs which are treasured in the Roman Church are forgeries; and there are Roman Catholic scholars who agree with them. They hold—all the non-Roman historians in the world hold—that the documents on which the power of Rome is essentially based are sheer forgeries. They hold that from the sixth to the twelfth century Roman priests poured upon Europe a flood of forgeries, very much to their own profit.

The simple question here is whether ancient Jewish priests had done the same thing a thousand years before. But that is different, you say. These supposed forgeries are not lives of saints and decrees of councils, but the Word of God.

Well then, what *is* a forgery? It is a deliberate falsification or fabrication of documents or of the signature to them. A letter, a poem (like "Ossian's" poems), an historical work (like some "found" recently in Italy), a will, a bank-note, a postage stamp even, may be forged.

Now the far greater part of the more learned clerical authorities on the Bible say that many books of the Old Testament pretend to be written by men who did not write them: that many books were deliberately written as history when the writers knew that they were not history: and that the Old Testament as a whole, as

we have it, is a deliberate attempt to convey an historical belief which the writers knew to be false.

But these learned authorities do not like the word forgery. It is crude. Let me give you a few illustrations, from easily accessible and weighty works, of what they do say. It will at least show you the elegance, the subtlety, the resources of diplomatic language.

The article "Israel" in the "Encyclopedia Biblica," a Christian work, is written by Professor Guthe, a learned theologian of Leipsic University. He says that the writers of the Old Testament have a "mode of regarding the facts" in which we can see "the workings of a primitive nature." He says that the poor historian of the Jews has a hard job "to remove the materials of his story out of the *false light* in which he finds them." He must "constantly bear in mind the peculiarities of the narrative"; and he frankly tells you that these are "their *legendary character,* their *conformity to a scheme,* and their *didactic purpose.*" Does it not sound very much like an extremely polite description of what plain men call a forgery?

The article "David" is by another famous theologian, Professor Marti. He says that "keen criticism is necessary to arrive at the kernel of fact" in the familiar story of David; and that some very learned theologians "deny that there is such a kernel of fact." Most theologians, however, he says, believe that "the *imaginative element* in the story of David is but the vesture which half conceals, half discloses, certain facts treasured in popular tradition." Nice language, isn't it?

Dr. Cheyne, recently a very high dignitary of the Church of England, writes on "Abraham." When he has done with the patriarch, we have only a tissue of "*legends* purified both by abridgment *and expansion.*" After all, that is only what the Koran did with Mohammed.

Professor Moore, of Andover Theological Seminary, writes the article on "Historical Literature." He thinks that the early historical writers of the Old Testament—not in the time of Moses, but centuries later, and not as we have their works now—were honest collectors of stories, but that later books were put together by the "mere literary process of conflation and contamination." Hard words. The scribes, he says, "combined different copies according to their own judgment *and interests.*" This gives us "a different religious point of view"—in plain English, a view of the facts which is not true—but the scribes merely acted "in a prophetic spirit." In the end another set of writers recast the whole of these honest legends and dishonest "contaminations," and added a vast amount of new matter (expressly ascribing it to Moses) for which, Professor Moore says, they probably had no sources—except their imagination and "interests." The result is our Old Testament.

But the "Encyclopedia Biblica" is full of this from cover to

cover of its four large volumes. Let us try the "Encyclopedia Britannica." Alas, it is just as bad. Professor Cook, of Cambridge University, says (article "Jews"); "Written by Oriental people, clothed in an Oriental dress, the Old Testament does not contain *objective* records," but "*subjective* history for specific purposes." One would like to hear a perjured witness in court defend himself on the ground that his statements were sound subjective history for a specific purpose. "Scholars are now almost unanimously agreed" on these manipulations, he says. But they have really rendered you a service. The Higher Criticism has "brought into relief the central truths which really are vital." What truths, you ask? Why, that the Old Testament gradually evolved from the tenth to the second century, and in its present form is mainly a fifth century compilation so distorting the facts that it has taken scholars a hundred and fifty years to get them straight.

Enough of these Higher Critics, you say: you know that I could quote a hundred of them. Well, let us take a learned Protestant divine, the Reverend Professor Sayce, of Oxford University, who is a vigorous opponent of Higher Critics. His chief work, "The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments," published by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, is the standard criticism of the Higher Criticism. Let us hear him, by all means; and I am going to take first a part of his work which will at the same time enable you to judge at once whether there are forgeries in the Old Testament and show you how we detect them.

You know well the book of Daniel. Some scenes of that vivid narrative, such as the famous feast of "Belshazzar the King" and the writing on the wall, have passed into the art and letters of the world. It expressly says throughout that it was written by Daniel himself. "I Daniel" occurs in every chapter.

Some time ago we recovered tablets of the great Persian king Cyrus, and Professor Sayce gives us a translation of them; and he compares them, as you may, with the words of Daniel: "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom." The tablets of Cyrus describe the taking of Babylon, and are beyond the slightest suspicion. The Persians had adopted the Babylonian custom of writing on clay, then baking the brick or tablet, and such documents last forever. And these and other authentic and contemporary documents of the age which Daniel describes show:

1. That Belshazzar was not king of Babylon.
2. That the name of the last king was Nabonidos.
3. That the city was taken peacefully, by guile, not by bloodshed.
4. That it was Cyrus, not Darius the Median, who took it.
5. That Darius, who is said (xi 1) by Daniel to have been the son of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), was really his father.

6. That all the Babylonian names in Daniel are absurdly misspelled and quite strange to the writer.

7. That the writer describes the Chaldeans in a way that no writer could have done before the time of Alexander the Great.

You can read the rest of the critic of the Higher Critics. It is now beyond question that the man who wrote Daniel, and pretended to be alive in 539 B. C. (when Babylon fell), did not live until three or four centuries later. The book is a tissue of errors, as we find by authentic documents and by reading the real Babylonian names on the tablets.

Now why did the writer do it, and what was his object? Quite clearly he wanted to convince the Jews that Jahveh would miraculously protect any Jews who refused to obey a sacrilegious king. And this gives us the clue to the date. It was in the second century B. C., when the Greek king, Antiochus Epiphanes, tried to compel the Jews to break their law. A pious Jew, probably a priest, then wrote this book: very clumsily, as in the course of three centuries the facts and names had been forgotten. Now we have recovered the real contemporary documents, and there is no room for dispute.

Well, is that a forgery? Sayce concludes leniently that it is "not historical in the modern sense of the word history"! Others blandly tell us that it was "a work of edification," one of the "hagiographa" (which means "*holy* writings"). You are asked to remember "the nature of the Oriental mind," which is so very different from the American. These superficial writers who talk of forgery, you are told, do not know the Oriental mind.

I know it well, and I know this: If you were to tell an Oriental Mohammedan that the wonderful things said about the Prophet in the Koran were "subjective history with a specific purpose," he would, when he learned precisely what you meant, knock you down. The Oriental loves stories, but he has as keen a sense as any of the difference between stories and sacred history. Daniel pretended to be history. Otherwise it would have had no effect. It is a forgery.

And Professor Sayce goes on to show that Ezra, Tobit and Judith—the latter are in the Catholic Bible—are on the same level. "The decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions," he says, "has finally destroyed all claim on the part of the Books of Tobit and Judith to be considered as history" (p. 552). It does not much matter that they are not in the Protestant canon. They are examples of ancient Jewish forgeries. Professor Sayce shows the same for familiar Bible stories like those of Susanna and Bel and the Dragon. In fact, this remarkable book, which sets out to destroy the Higher Critics, begins with decisive proof that Genesis is a compilation of Babylonian legends (ascribed to Moses) and ends with the exposures I have given!

You see now how we detect forgeries. There are two chief

ways: the style of the documents and the testimony of other and undisputed documents. The second method I have illustrated; and, now that we have recovered such a mass of ancient literature, it covers a great deal of the Old Testament.

The first method, to judge a literary writing by its literary style, has been much ridiculed by pious people; and the ridicule is ridiculous. On the orthodox theory the Old Testament was written at different periods during more than a thousand years. Now there is not a language known that does not change so much in the course of centuries that even a child can see the difference at a glance. The inexpert reader will find it almost impossible to read the earliest English literature. Even as late as the eighteenth century, English was written quite differently from the way in which we write it today. Literary experts can tell at once whether a French, Italian, German, or English book was written in the thirteenth (like Dante's Italian), sixteenth, or nineteenth century.

So we can with Hebrew, because even on the most advanced theory the writing of the Old Testament covers seven hundred years. And this is the simple method of the Higher Critics, which preachers who do not know a word of Hebrew—and could not even themselves read the English of Chaucer—ridicule. This method confidently shows us fragments of different ages in the Old Testament put together at a far later date. Further, we find inconsistencies, contradictions, and duplications which cannot otherwise be explained. Now, in addition, we have a very great deal of history and archeology by which we can check the Old Testament.

THE PRIESTLY FORGERS

What I mean when I say that the Old Testament was "forged" will now be fairly clear. In the first place, whole books, like Daniel, are what we call in modern English forgeries; and, if the Jews of twenty-two hundred or even twenty-five hundred years ago had known the real origin of them, they would have called them forgeries. They were effective, and were intended to be effective, only because the readers were induced to believe that the events they described had actually happened. That Jahveh could be made to do wonderful things in *mere fiction* would not have been a surprise to any Oriental, or anybody else. So the fiction was represented as fact, and the authorship was concealed under a spurious name.

The Old Testament professes to be, and the orthodox believe it to be, a collection of books which appeared at intervals, with divine inspiration, during a thousand years of Jewish history. It is supposed that Moses wrote, or caused to be written, the Pentateuch (except the last few verses). It is believed that Judges, Kings and Chronicles go back to the times they describe: that the prophecies were added from the ninth century onward; and so on. Now the critical theory is that not a single book of the Old Testa-

ment, as we have it, is older than the ninth century, and that in the fifth century all the older books and fragments were combined together into the Old Testament as we have it, and were drastically altered so as to yield a version of early Hebrew history which is not true.

It is believed that this was done by the Jewish priests; and that fact, not prejudice, is the reason for the title of this chapter. The object of this manipulation of the Hebrew writings was, according to all scholars, to represent the Jewish priesthood and its rights and customs to have been established in the days of Moses. All the scholars to whom I refer admit this, and admit that the representation is false. And so, not being either a priest or a professor or other polite person, I speak of priestly forgers.

It is the almost universal opinion of scholars that a priestly group in Babylon, using some old material, fabricating new, and perverting the entire history of the cult and the priesthood, made a priestly code and ascribed it to Moses. Is that forgery? It is equally the almost universal opinion that in Jerusalem they went on to combine this code, again falsifying the historical facts, with the older existing writings and made the Pentateuch nearly as we have it.

As to Ezra, remember that he was not only a zealous priest but "a ready scribe in the law of Moses" (Ezra vii 6). In fact, for once I think we shall find much food for thought in an apocryphal work (I Esdras xiv 22): "I [Ezra] shall write all that hath been done in the world since the beginning and the things that were written in thy law." He (and his associates) did. The old Hebrews, admitting that he wrote the whole Pentateuch, used to say that he had "revelation" to help him. The clerical professors say that he had some mysterious fund of old materials, which he "worked up" and made to serve his purpose. What do *you* think? Remember, this book made the priesthood all-powerful for the first time in Judea.

THE MISTAKES OF MOSES

Now let us examine the Pentateuch, or "Five Books" with which the Old Testament opens. One smiles today at the vast amount of ink that was spilt in the nineteenth century over the question whether Moses wrote them. There is now no scholar who would entertain the idea. The only foundation for any belief that Moses wrote or dictated them is a statement in precisely those passages in Kings, Chronicles and Ezra—all very late books—in which the forgers produce them and *say* that Moses wrote them.

But let us look at the first two pages from another point of view. The first page of the Bible is in flat contradiction to what every educated person now knows; and even the pious work of the Rev. Professor Sayce, issued still by the Society for the Pro-

motion of Christian Knowledge (of a Fundamentalist shade), proves emphatically that the early chapters of Genesis are modifications of Babylonian legends.

Attempts to "reconcile Genesis and science" never come now from men who know science. The Hebrew text, which I know well, having had a course of Hebrew at Louvain University, is not one inch nearer to science than the English text. It is neither poetry —I have read it in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and English—nor accurate statement.

There is first a dark chaos, created by God. Why God created matter in a chaotic state and then, in six days, put it in order, is rather a puzzle to the believer. It would be just as easy for the "creative word" to make an orderly as a chaotic universe. Desperate apologists remind you how science (which they pretend not to believe) put a nebula at the beginning; and one might (if one did not know Hebrew) think of the chaos as a nebula. But a nebula is light, not dark; and it most assuredly has no water in it. Let us use our common sense. The Hebrew for the chaos is *tohu vah bohu*, which is plainly a primitive people's corruption of the Babylonian *tiamat*, the original chaos. To the learned Babylonian, the first state of things was a watery waste, land and water mixed up together, and the gods had first to separate them. The Hebrew follows the Babylonian legend in all that it says.

But this is really waste of time. Any man who thinks that the teaching of science is in harmony with the Genesis order of creation: (1) light, (2) division of water from the sky or firmament, (3) division of land from water and creation of plants (including fruit trees), (4) appearance of the sun and moon, (5) production of birds from the water, (6) production of reptiles (after birds) and mammals and man, ought to try politics instead of theology. It is sheer nonsense. Moreover, the second chapter of Genesis makes matters worse by putting first the creation of man, then trees, then mammals, then woman.

It is frankly ridiculous to talk of science in such a connection. The only agreement with science (and this is undone by the second chapter) is that the grass was created before the cattle, which eat it, and the cattle before the man, who eats them. I say this quite deliberately after (for the hundredth time) reading slowly the first chapter of Genesis. Seriously, does one need inspiration to guess that?

Next as to chronology. I have heard Fundamentalist leaders scoff at the idea that the Bible puts creation about 4000 B. C. In a debate with me Dr. Riley has said that he is quite prepared to admit that, as science claims, the earth is more than a billion years old. But if the reader cares to go through Genesis carefully, and note the age of each patriarch at the time his first son was born, he

will find that the Old Testament does actually date creation about 6000 years ago. I have done it. You try it.

Then there is the lovely Garden of Eden—quite plainly, we now know, the Babylonian *Edin* or plain—and the ghastly story of the curse of the whole human race for the sin of two people. It is a Babylonian story; and the Hindus, Egyptians, and others had the same story. As to Noah and the Flood, I imagine that every theologian in the world has thrown up the sponge on that wonderful specimen of early man's idea of what a God might do. It is all in the Babylonian tablets, even down to such details as the sending out of the dove and the raven and the resting of the ark on a high mountain.

The story of Babel also is a childlike legend of which we have traces in Babylonia. It is naïve enough in the Old Testament. God gets jealous of man's progress in civilization. Man has built a city, which is clearly meant for Babylon (consult the admirable Sayce), and a high tower, which means one of the lofty, stepped temples of Babylonia. The whole story is a very primitive attempt to explain how men came to speak different languages. We have today actual specimens of the Cretan, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Chinese languages going back ages before the alleged date of Babel.

I am not aware that any scholar, clerical or lay, of our time, questions the Babylonian origin of the Genesis legends, and we need not anticipate here by reproducing the ancient stories. We do not suggest that the Jews adopted these legends during the Captivity. They were probably well known in Canaan, and were, indeed, probably the only available answers to the riddle of the universe, when the Hebrews arrived there. It is probable, in fact, that they were written in a Hebrew version centuries before the Captivity. But no one can read the Babylonian originals, which we now have, and doubt the ultimate source of the early chapters of Genesis.

Properly educated clergymen admit this, and say that the "inspiration" is seen in the change from Polytheism to Monotheism. The very first line, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," is said to rise high above all ancient literature. But in the Babylonian legend itself it is *one* god, Marduk, who puts chaos in order and creates the world; and Monotheism was established in Egypt centuries before a line of the Old Testament was written.

THE MYTHICAL HISTORY OF THE JEWS

In popular belief the story of Abraham is very simple. His original name was Abram, and he lived in "Ur of the Chaldees"; but God called him and changed his name to Ab-ra-ham, which is the Hebrew for "the father of many peoples."

Blessed are the ignorant, for they have no difficulties. The word Abraham does not mean "the father of many peoples." No

Hebrew scholar can make it mean anything. It has "no meaning in Hebrew," Dean Cheyne says. Apparently a chief named Abram was treasured in Hebrew tradition, but a later generation got confused over the name—there were then no vowels (or vowel points) in Hebrew—and spelt it Abraham. So the priestly forgers of a later date neatly joined the two together by the above story. And one trace of their handiwork is "Ur of the Chaldees." Abram may have come from Ur; but it was not a "city of the Chaldees" until ages afterwards—when the legend was written.

Abram means "high father" or "great father." Late in Jewish history he began to be regarded as the ancestor of the people. But most probably this grew out of a tradition about him, and now, say Professor Sayce and Professor Sellin, these old traditions have been gloriously vindicated and the Higher Critics shattered. New archeological discoveries have given us confirmation of the names of certain kings mentioned in the story of Abraham. The good news spread through the religious world like a breath of spring.

This is a good illustration of the reasons why critics of the clergy and the religious press are inclined to call them dishonest. They mislead the people. Of the entire story of Abram only the fact that three or four kings mentioned are now known to have really existed is confirmed. It would follow only that there *was* an ancient legend about Abram: but of the whole *supernatural* story about him there is not a tittle of confirmation.

These supposed archeological discoveries "confirming" the Bible are all of that nature. A few names of kings, or alliances, or battles in many centuries are confirmed: a vast amount is disproved (as we saw about Daniel). Honest common sense will see in this only a confirmation of the view of the Old Testament which I have given. Those who fabricated it in the fifth century included some older writings which were based on tribal traditions; but what was in those writings we rarely know.

And this particular "triumph" is very modest. One of the royal names discovered is King Khammurabi of Babylon. Obviously the same name is Amraphel in the Abram story, religious writers say! It is by no means obvious; and learned Assyriologists ridicule it. Moreover, Khammurabi lived before 2000 B. C., and Professor Sellin is very much puzzled about this. However, as all that he can offer you in the end is "an ancient Canaanitish narrative which shows us Abram as a valiant Khabiri chieftain who followed the fortunes of the rulers of Jerusalem," perhaps you are not further interested. The Hebrews, who came later to Canaan, appropriated the legend, made this valiant Bedouin adventurer an ancestor of their race, and the priests later decorated this scanty and bloody story with a supernatural halo.

Joseph is the next outstanding historical figure; all that lies between him and Abram is a totally unreliable "working up" of

ancient legend for priestly purposes. But Joseph retires with the Khabiri chieftain into the very dim mists of ancient legend. You remember how (Genesis xli 43), when Joseph was set high, the Egyptian people called before him, "Bow the knee." It is now certain that this is a fanciful rendering of a word which the ancient translators did not understand. The word, we now know, is a purely Babylonian title of honor! See the worthy Sayce. Strange, isn't it, to find an Egyptian crowd talking Babylonian?

And Sayce also warns his pious reader, though very delicately, as beseems the subject, that the very popular story of Potiphar's wife has so close a parallel in an Egyptian story which we have found that it is "impossible not to see the connection." By the way, he is quite wrong in saying "impossible," for the Rabbi Dr. Jacob Horovitz in his recent attack on the Higher Critics ("Die Josephserzählung," 1921) says there is no connection. You shall, as usual, please yourself. I ask only the use of common sense. Sayce himself says repeatedly that these zealots are quite as bad as the Higher Critics. "Hair-splitters," he calls both groups.

This is no new find; but it takes a long time for the discoveries to reach the body of the faithful. It was in 1852 that scholars found the Orbiney Papyrus, now in the British Museum at London. It is a story of two brothers who lived together. They were working together in the field one day, and the elder, who was married, sent the younger back to the house for some seed. The wife, who confessed she had had her eye on him for some time, saw her opportunity. "Come," she said—I am translating from Rabbi Horovitz, "let us lie together for an hour. That will be pleasant for you, and I will make fine clothes for you." The blushing youth indignantly refused, and fled: which says much for ancient Egyptian morals. So the wife, to protect herself, told people he had tried to seduce her, and when her husband came home, she accused the younger brother of saying to her: "Let down thy hair, and let us lie together for an hour." And the elder slew the younger brother.

Well, compare for yourself Genesis xxxix with this. Joseph went to his master's house "to do his business," and, as there was no one else there but the wife, "she caught him by his garment, saying: Lie with me." He refused, and she turned the tables on him, as in the novel.

Do *you* see any connection? And remember the Babylonian title and the fact that the very abundant remains of Egypt give us not the least confirmation of the story of the Jews in Egypt. Then remember how Genesis was put together seven hundred years later, and . . . May we not pass on?

Exodus is in exactly the same position. Sayce in fact shows that we now know that if the Hebrews had followed the route there described they would have passed through Egyptian territory!

It and Numbers are a tissue of myths put together for a purpose centuries later. I am, as I said, inclined to believe that some of the Hebrew tribes at least entered the fringe of Egypt, and then wandered in the desert to Palestine. But their story remained oral for centuries; and the account in the Pentateuch is "a didactic novel." And Deuteronomy and Leviticus are priestly forgeries.

Did you ever notice in the Pentateuch, which is supposed to have been written by Moses, such phrases as "the Canaanite dwelled *then* in the land" (Genesis xii 6 and xiii 7) or "before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (xxxvi 31)? All such sentences were clearly written ages after Moses: when there *were* kings in Israel, and there were *not* Canaanites. Moreover, as Professor Sellin says, "nearly every occurrence from the creation of the world to the death of Moses is related to us twice, and in some cases three times." This puts beyond the shadow of a doubt the late and composite origin. Moses, we hope, did not see his visions double.

All this runs on in Joshua and the other "historical books." The writer of Joshua (who never pretends to be Joshua) often says that a thing goes on "unto this day" (ix 27 and xv 63). In xxiv 31 he intimates that he is writing at least after the death of the eldest person who had known Joshua. There are the same doubles and contradictions. In short, as I said, the Samaritans know not the book; so it goes back to the fifth century, and we will waste no time on its history. Nor will we linger over Judges, another composite history with a purpose.

Samuel and Kings have all the same faults. The plain truth is that we cannot by independent authority prove a single statement of any importance in the history of the Jews until their history is no longer miraculous. It is a waste of time to try to get a "kernel of facts," and it will be far better to show in some detail that even the latest historical works, which *ought* to be most reliable, are a series of forgeries including, in a changed form, ancient traditions the original form of which we do not know.

We read in I Chronicles (xxix 7) of money being paid or valuated in *darics*, that is to say, coins of the Persian Darius; so, obviously, this was written long after 520 (the first year of Darius I). We read further (iii 19, etc.) that six generations had elapsed since Zerubbabel, so the book must have been written about 400 B. C. We read in Nehemiah (xii 1-26) a list of names that go back to the time of Alexander the Great (died 323). In a word, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah are impudent forgeries of the fourth century, using some ancient memoirs (perhaps—there is no proof), but giving a totally false version of the events.

We have already seen this in the case of Ezra and Nehemiah. Checked by the statements of the really contemporary prophets Haggai and Zechariah, they are full of purposive mis-

statements. Dean Cheyne says that "the redactors' own contributions are largely inventions," and that this is especially true of what they say about the return of the Jews from Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple. Zechariah plainly shows that the exiles were still in Babylonia when the temple was rebuilt; yet the author, or what is politely called "the redactor," and impolitely called the forger, of Ezra gives us a glowing description of 42,360 Jews, with 7,337 servants, two hundred singing men and women, and great troops of horses and treasures of gold. Incidentally, as we saw in the first chapter, only about 4,000 men had been deported. We are asked to believe that in two generations they grew, on the fertile plains of Babylon, to 42,360; and thousands never returned. And in those days a population took several centuries to double!

We have, in fine, seen the value of the "history" of Ezra, the ready scribe, bringing forward the real "law of Moses." Even the 42,360 (the nucleus of his large audience, presumably) were astonished at it. No serious scholar doubts that it was "redacted" in Babylon by the priests. "Redaction" or "recension" is the scholarly word for these things. In our own degenerate age a "redactor" would be accused of forgery if he added one line to the writings he was editing. We are asked not to give the name to priests of ancient Judea who, for their own high profit, invented (as far as we can tell) nine lines for every one they edited, and "redacted" the one line until it became false.

But what's in a name? The main point is that practically all the experts assure you that in scores of material points the Old Testament history has been discredited, and has only been confirmed in a few unimportant incidental statements; and that the books are a tissue of inventions, expansions, conflations, or recensions dating centuries after the events.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PROPHETS

A prophet in old days was not a man who predicted, but a man who refused to call a forgery a recension. They were men who spoke out: as Jeremiah did about Hilkiah's pious fraud. They called a whore a whore, and altogether made some edifying reading for the children of British and American schools of the year 1929.

I do not object to calling a spade a spade, having some inclination that way myself, but the real modern interest in the prophets is based upon the supposition that they made remarkable predictions. These supposed predictions have been so thoroughly annihilated so long ago that it were waste of time to linger with them.

We now know enough of the character of the Old Testament to understand that a large number of the prophecies were written after the event. The prophets were "redacted," like all the other

literature. Prophecies were forged during some hundreds of years. In other cases, the prophet merely referred to the past; as when Isaiah wrote some remarkable descriptions of the "Servant of God," which were for ages regarded as predictions concerning Christ, and are characterizations of Moses. In other cases the predictions were shrewd forecasts, such as we make about the weather or a baseball game; and the few cases in which the men were right have been emphasized, and the scores of cases in which they were wrong neglected. In other cases they are wrongly translated, as in the famous "Behold a virgin will conceive"; for the Hebrew word is not "virgin," but "girl," and conception by a girl was not miraculous in ancient Judea.

No, the prophets, as distinguished from the priests, were men who spoke out; which is the real meaning of the word. But they spoke out with especial picturesqueness. The nation was young and poetic, and its ways were primitive. You remember how Saul was moved by a spirit and behaved like a dancing dervish. It was common all over that part of the ancient world; and not unknown in modern *séances*. And the prophet regarded himself as a very superior person, and was very dirty. From the prophets of Arabia, apparently, he borrowed the habit of dressing in a mantle of goat's hair and having mystic marks on his forehead.

These men (and women) were seers, and people paid them for advice. Now and again one rose to high notoriety and founded a school: probably in the wild mountains. Such was Elijah. But, alas, the moment we want to know all about him, the biblical experts intimidate us. There is, we are told, "probably a basis of fact" in the story of Elijah and Elisha, but we can't disentangle it as "the interests of the prophetic order led to some unhistoric fictions and exaggerations": not forgeries, of course. However, I am glad for once. That bear-and-innocent-little-children story always made me sick.

We may pass over these crude beginnings of the new art of prophecy and come to the great masters. Amos and Hosea were the first; and, naturally enough, they are the crudest and most poetic. A nation is most gifted with poetic imagery in its adolescence, when the imagination is far more developed than the intellect. That is why the Bible is "great literature"; at least a good deal of it is. I am not here repeating a shibboleth. I have read most of the finest poetry of many languages, and that is my opinion. It is quite natural. These parts of the Old Testament—large sections of the prophecies and early psalms, for instance—were written in the youth of the Hebrew race and translated in the youth or literary springtime of the English race.

But Amos and Hosea are morally crude in the same proportion. Amos, who seems to have been active about 750 B. C., was a shepherd. Jahveh "calls" him, and he begins to fling fiery invectives at

the people, who find him his daily bread for that reason. His Jahveh is a fiercely vindictive old deity, always planning fearful schemes of punishment. The great sin is what the translators honestly call "whoredom"; which hurts the feelings of the modern professors. Judea, the one land (some think) which did not lie in darkness and the shadow of death, seems to have been full of whores, in spite of polygamy and concubinage. And, figuratively, the great collective sin of the nation is whoredom—a courting of false gods (whose existence is not denied). The Hebrews had to have Monotheism drilled into them.

Hosea, who was active in the northern kingdom about the same time, or about 750 to 725, is a shade worse. The call of Jahveh to him was, he says: "Take unto thee a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom, for the land doth commit great whoredom." It seems clear, and is generally believed, that he literally obeyed the divine command, and learned to love the girl. But Israel's sins fire him, and he pours it out volcanically. It is really funny to reflect that pious people have read for centuries these scorching descriptions of the morals of Judea, yet have continued to believe that the Hebrews alone "saw the light." We know that Egypt was then as moral as Minnesota is today, and that in Babylon they drowned people for adultery. Hosea ends, however, with a really fine bit of poetry.

To read the Bible intelligently, you must read the books in their chronological order. You may not be able to pick out the earlier fragments from the Pentateuch and historical books, and you must remember that even such books as Amos and Hosea were "redacted." But, taking the books as a whole, read first Amos, then Hosea, then Isaiah, who seems to have been "called" about 740 B. C.

Here, however, you strike a glaring instance of—are we to call it forgery, conflation, or what? The book of Isaiah, as we have it, is (apart from later manipulations) the work of two totally different writers, separated from each other by two centuries. It would be foolish to think that a competent Hebrew scholar cannot detect this. It is as easy as it would be to separate the parts if somebody now made a joint work out of a Massachusetts divine of the early eighteenth century and the Rev. Straton or Dr. Riley. The style, diction, and whole personality are strikingly different.

The real Isaiah seems to have been a man of good social position and education, and keenly interested in politics. He was pro-Assyrian, and he was opposed by the pro-Egyptians at court. His opponents won, and Judea cast off its allegiance to Assyria and turned to Egypt. Very well, said Isaiah, this is what you may expect; and he gave a very reasonable forecast (touched up later) of the punishment of Judea by the Assyrians. This is the extent of his "predictions."

Toward the close of the exile in Babylonia, some other Jew continued, or imitated, the prophecy of Isaiah. He "predicted" the exile; that is to say, he forged a prediction in the name of Isaiah, for the text shows when he was writing. He predicts a terrible destruction of Babylon itself (which was taken peacefully) by the Medes (who did not take it); and Babylon was in Isaiah's time not the enemy of Judea. It is quite clear that he wrote during the Captivity, but before Cyrus appeared. His language and religious ideas are quite different from those of Isaiah, but the two have been pieced together in one book. The critics politely call him Deutero-Isaiah, which means "Second Isaiah." Shall we call him the forger of half of Isaiah (thirty or forty chapters of it, including those most quoted)?

Next you take the second "major" prophet, Jeremiah. He is described as "one of the gentlest of men"; though, as we saw, he told Hilkiah in very good Hebrew that his new book was "a lie." However, Judea was still so wicked and perverse that the pessimism of the prophets touches its deepest note in Jeremiah. Generally the predictions of these prophets took the same general shape. The Jews were going to be fearfully punished—rebels generally were in those days—but the Lord would some day rehabilitate them. There is still time for the fulfilment of the latter part. Jeremiah was the son of a priest, and was "called" in the year 626.

We ought to have considered Micah before Jeremiah, as he is supposed to have been a contemporary of Isaiah. But as his work is really not worth considering (from our present point of view), and is hopelessly adulterated, we pass on to the famous Ezekiel.

The critics say that he is "far less attractive" than Jeremiah—who is the typical "dismal prophet" of all literature—so we may not be disposed to linger long in his valley of dry bones. He was a priest, of the sterner type, and was probably deported to Babylonia in 597. He spat the coldest fire that prophet ever erupted: a man of incandescent zeal for religion as a system of church-observances, but of fantastic imagery and poor diction. Nothing but a blind zeal for the "Word of God" could enable any modern person to be interested in him.

The rest of the prophets are not worth noticing. Joel ("probably the name was prefixed by the redactor [forger] out of his own head," says a learned divine), Malachi (a clumsy misunderstanding of a name, says another divine), and Obadiah ("most probably a fictitious name," says Cheyne) are fifth or fourth century forgeries. Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah are very unimportant dervishes of the seventh century. Haggai and Zechariah are genuine prophets of the sixth century, who, as we saw, prove that Esdras is a liar, as Jeremiah said. The prophets need not detain us further.

With the prophets, however, we may consider the book of

Psalms. "The Psalms of David" they are called; and the writers of them repeatedly represent that they were written by King David, as in the close of Ps. lxxii. There is not a scholar in the world who now believes that any of them were composed by David. Taking advantage of the statement (which we now know to have been written centuries later) that David was "a harpist," later Jewish writers often attributed their songs to him. But internal evidence and the language itself show that they are a collection of songs or chants composed mainly five to seven hundred years after the time of David. As late as the second century B. C. it was a much disputed question amongst the Jews if David was really the author. Now everybody in Tennessee is sure that he was.

The "psaltery" was a stringed instrument used by the Jews, and so any kind of song or hymn sung to it was called a psalm. Even the light songs composed for wedding feasts, which were very giddy occasions in the east, were sung to the psaltery; and we therefore find that some of the "psalms" (such as xlv) were simply poems to be sung at a royal marriage festival. The whole book is, in fact, merely what we should now call an "anthology" of Jewish poetry. Some psalms are taken word for word from Samuel. Others (such as xx, xxi, lxi, lxiii, etc.) are actually addressed to the king, and it was always quite absurd to suggest that the author of these was David or Solomon. There is only one that could possibly be considered as going back in parts to the time of David. Psalm civ is taken bodily from the Egyptian liturgy.

So we dismiss the second part of the Old Testament. The prophets and psalms are interesting as characteristic literature of a people that is just learning civilization from older nations. Some of the psalms, in particular, are so crude and bloody in their sentiments that the Church of England has lately debated in solemn conferences whether it ought not to omit them from its services. Of "inspiration" and "revelation" there is no question. They are monotheistic; but Egypt had found Monotheism four or five centuries before the earliest prophet or psalmist appeared, and Monotheism was a truism when the bulk of them were written.

PIOUS FICTION

We are now in a position to estimate the sincerity of the plea of those who ask us to keep the Bible in our modern schools. Sometimes they urge this because it is "great literature." Open your Bible at page one and see how far you have to read—how many days you have to read—before you come to a page that you would honestly call great literature. It is, of course, splendidly rendered, in fine poetic old English; but only certain parts of it, chiefly in the Prophets and the Psalms, are really fit to help in forming a literary taste, and those parts are for adults, not children. This plea is not sincere.

But it is usually said that the Bible is invaluable as a unique record of the evolution of a people and its religion. We now realize how insincere this is. The men who make the plea are precisely those who reject the "inspiration" of the Bible—or they would not plead for it in this way—and are aware of the results of critical work. They know well that the order of the books in the Bible is as far as possible from a chronological order, and that the story of the religious evolution of the Jews which the Old Testament in its present form tells is a priestly forgery. The facts were quite different.

Ecclesiastes is one of the strangest books that was ever included in a sacred collection. The author is an Epicurean philosopher. He believes in God, but is an Agnostic as to a future life. Over and over again he expresses his skepticism, so that the one verse which does profess belief in a future life is palpably part of the retouching which (as we can trace) the book suffered later at orthodox hands. The writer disdains the temple sacrifices (v 1) and constantly urges his readers to eat and drink and be merry while the sun shines. He was probably a Jew living in the new Greco-Egyptian city of Alexandria about 200 B. C. We will not call him a forger, as his assumption of the name of Solomon would deceive nobody.

Proverbs is much earlier, probably going back to the fourth century, when Greek influence began, but the "Wisdom of Solomon," or "Ecclesiasticus," is a work written in Greek in the first century before Christ by (probably) another Alexandrian Jew. It has, significantly, no hope of a Messiah; but it has plenty of Greek philosophy, which was not born until five centuries after Solomon.

But the most curious and entertaining book of the whole Bible and one of the finest and most genuine pieces of literature in it, is the Song of Solomon. I used to blush when, as young students for the priesthood, we solemnly chanted its voluptuous verses about ladies' thighs and breasts and bellies. We were told that it was all a superb symbol of the union of Christ and his Church, or at least the union of Jahveh and the synagogue. Even in the prudent translation which we have in the Bible it is what we should call, if it were *not* in the Bible, a most licentious piece of work.

We are not at all sure that there is not a mythological element in parts of it, which seem to celebrate the union of the sun-god and moon-goddess (Shelamith). But as a whole it is plainly a collection of Oriental marriage songs. In the east a marriage festival lasts a week, and songs about the charms of the bride and the bridegroom's particular interest in her are features of the celebration. Some of these songs may be quite old, but others include Persian, and even Greek, words, so that the collection must belong to about the

fourth century. By that time the forged historical works had made Solomon and all his glory and his wives very popular amongst the Jews, and an aspiring author could not do better than borrow his name. As far as we can recover traces of Solomon through the mists of time—a petty king living in a third-rate Oriental mansion—he was quite capable of writing this (though not quite in such grand language) about a young lady's "navel" and "belly" and so on. We bowdlerize "Hamlet," where the prince talks to Ophelia; and we read solemnly to our children from the "Song": "He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts," etc.

CHAPTER VIII

Religion and Morals in Ancient Babylon

Babylon and Its People—The Code of Laws—Babylonian Prayer Books—The Land of Devils

Babylon and Its People

THE first great historian, Herodotus, a Greek who traveled widely over the ancient world several centuries before the birth of Christ, has left us a description of the city of Babylon. It is believed by many scholars that he personally visited the mighty city in its decline; though we hardly need the warning that, even if he passed through Mesopotamia, he would not speak the language, and his remarkable statements must come largely from the lips of "guides." However that may be, this Greek description represented almost all that we knew about Babylon until recent times.

And we can understand the Greek's enthusiasm. The city was built in a perfect square, one-half on each side of the river Euphrates, and the streets ran in straight lines, north to south and east to west; as in a modern American city. Two vast walls, three hundred and thirty-five feet in height and eighty-five feet broad at the top, enclosed the city; and they were, he says, fifty-six miles in circumference, so that the entire enclosed area would comprise nearly two hundred square miles! A hundred magnificent bronze gates pierced the walls; and smaller walls, each pierced by twenty-five bronze gates at the end of the streets, shut the city from the river.

"In magnificence," Herodotus goes on, "there is no other city that approaches it." The walls and public buildings, constructed generally of sun-dried bricks—for there is little stone in the region—were faced with glazed or enameled tile of brilliant colors. Nor was this artistic coating, which shone in the Mesopotamian sun, a monotonous surface of blue or yellow or white. The Babylonian artisans attained so high a pitch of art in enameling their clay that huge figures of bulls or lions or legendary animals stood out in relief from the bright surface. Great bronze figures of bulls and serpents guarded the gates. The houses which lined the streets were "mostly three or four stories high." The palaces of the rich added to the splendor; and one of the "seven wonders of the world" were certain "hanging gardens," which seem to

have been beautiful parks of trees and flowers in the topmost of a series of super-imposed arches rising seventy-five feet above the ground, and irrigated by an ingenious apparatus which brought up water from the river.

We can well believe that, as he vaguely says, the king's palace was a stupendous building; for the mound of clay into which it has sunk in the course of time is seven hundred yards, or nearly half a mile, in circuit. But the most impressive edifices were the great temples. That of the chief god, Marduk, rose about three hundred feet above the level of the city; and its seven stages were (at the lowest level) coated with pitch and above faced with red, blue, orange or yellow enameled tile, or faced with gold or silver, in honor of the sun (gold), the moon (silver), and the five large known planets, with which the chief Babylonian gods were associated.

The furniture was as magnificent as the structure was imposing. Three great courts enclosed the area round the temple, and on the west side of the inner court, opposite the vast pyramid, was the temple of the god Marduk and his wife. Here was a gold statue of the god forty feet high, with a gold table, a gold chair, and a gold altar. Outside was a stone altar on which animals were sacrificed, and an incredible quantity of incense was burned. Up the side of the seven-staged temple ran a winding stair, and at the top was the symbolical chamber of the god, with furniture of solid gold, awaiting the hour when he would descend to visit his priestess.

From the summit of the temple one would look for many miles over the great plain (in Babylonian, "Edin") which sustained the millions of humbler folk who in turn sustained all this splendor. But even the soil was a prodigy. The harvest was, Herodotus says, twice or thrice as bountiful as in other lands, the ears of wheat and barley growing to a phenomenal size. Rich groves of palm trees waved in the breeze all over the plain; and so expert were the food-growers that from the fruit of the palm they got "bread, wine, and honey." From their scattered villages they looked with pride toward Babel—it is the Greeks who made the name "Babylon"—or "The Gate of the God": a name which ignorant Hebrew scribes long afterwards connected with their own word for "to confuse" and turned into a myth.

Herodotus brings the very people before us in this enthusiastic account of Babylon in the First Book of his history. They were clad in white linen tunics to the feet. Over this they wore a woolen tunic or robe and a white mantle. They had the full beards of the Semite, and wore their hair long; and both men and women copiously bathed themselves with perfumes. Men carried walking sticks, with fancily carved heads; and they had seals, to seal the

clay envelopes of their clay letters, dangling from their girdles. Women had strings of beads on their heads.

But how did they live? Here the historian begins to tell stories which, considering the high civilization of the Babylonians, are less easy to believe than his descriptions of the city.

They had no physicians, he says. The sick man was laid in one of the public squares with which the city abounded, and every passerby was compelled to ask his symptoms or his malady. If any had had the same malady, or knew another person who had been similarly afflicted, he told the patient what to do. And if the sick man died, he was buried in honey!

Marriage, he says, was by purchase or auction sale. On a certain day all the maids of a place were assembled and put up to the highest bidder. No parent was permitted otherwise to dispose of his daughter; and assuredly no daughter to dispose of herself. The price was pooled and equally divided in dowries, so that the prettier girls helped to endow the less favored.

This is bad enough, as we shall see, but I will conclude this sketch from the pages of Herodotus with his account of their "one most shameful custom"; for the whole evil reputation of Babylon for more than two thousand years, and its reputation for vice in the minds of most people today, is based almost entirely upon this passage. A religious reader might remind me that the "prophet" Baruch makes precisely the same statement (vi, 43), but I invite him to learn that "Baruch" is the latest and most shameless of the Jewish forgeries, and was almost certainly written in the first century of the present era. The writer of it does not confirm, but he drew his own information from, the Greek historian.

This famous statement about the morals of ancient Babylon is to the effect that every woman had "once in her life" to prostitute herself in what Herodotus calls "the court of Venus": meaning no doubt, the court of the temple of the goddess Ishtar. There she was compelled to stand until some man threw her a coin, saying, "The goddess Mylitta prosper thee," and taking her away to his couch. The ordeal—Herodotus is kind enough to represent it as an ordeal to them—was over at once for the prettier maids of Babylon; but the plainer, he calmly says, had to "wait three or four years in the precinct." And even Sir J. G. Frazer has not been intimidated by the absurdity of the latter sentence, or by the almost unanimous rejection of the whole story by modern scholars, and has given further currency and the weight of his own authority to it in his great work "Adonis, Attis, Osiris."

Herodotus—most of the preachers who quote the legend do not seem to know—not only represents Babylonian women as shrinking from the affront to which their religion and their priest exposed them, but he graciously adds that, once a woman has accepted the coin and discharged her debt, "no gift, however great,

will prevail with her." A modern Herodotus would hardly say that of the entire body of women of one of our modern cities! And there is a third passage of the historian which represents the Babylonians as singularly delicate in regard to sex. When a husband and wife have had intercourse at night, he says, they must sit on either side of a burning censer until dawn, and they must then purify themselves by washing before they are allowed to touch anything.

I reproduce this medley of incredible stories so that the reader may see for himself the very feeble foundation for the common opinion of ancient Babylon; the source of the myth that is still treasured in the religious literature of the world. That Herodotus ever visited Babylon seems to me almost as incredible as that Sir J. G. Frazer ever read Herodotus. In any case, modern scholars have long suspected that the legend about the women of Babylon is an absurdity, and recent archeological research has completely discredited it. This chapter will establish beyond cavil that the men and women of Babylon were at least as moral in sexual matters as, and probably more moral than, the inhabitants of any metropolis of our time. But let us at once correct some of the errors of the historian.

Babylon was a mighty city, and all that Herodotus says about its beauty is confirmed by our discoveries. I am speaking of the city of Babylon which was known to the ancient Jews in the sixth century B. C.; for it had earlier been destroyed by the Assyrians and had then, as the curse of the great god Marduk clung to the destroyers, been rebuilt on a larger scale, and lavishly decorated in the seventh century. This new and grander Babylon is the city of Herodotus and of the Old Testament.

Singularly enough, though its circuit seems to have been nearer twelve miles than the fifty-six miles of the Greek historian, its famous walls were actually about ninety feet broad at the top. Several automobiles, had there been such things, could have raced abreast along the lofty summit of the walls. Except in regard to the area of the city Herodotus was well informed.

But in regard to its morals and its women he totally misunderstood his informants. There was no auction of wives in Babylon, and there was no such law as the prostitution of every woman at the temple of Ishtar. By that time, as we shall see, Ishtar was actually a patroness of virtue and the chief "refuge of sinners." Women had in ancient Babylon a position of respect and prestige scarcely lower than they have won in modern times; and the law of sexual purity was most drastically enforced upon both sexes.

Modern learned commentators on Herodotus (such as How and Wells, now the standard authorities) curtly dismiss both of these statements of the historian. Marriage by auction was, they say, an ancient custom that had been abandoned ages before the

time of Herodotus and of the Jewish Exile. The marriage mart is, or has been, a real Oriental custom, but it obviously belongs to village life or a low state of development. It is absurd to think of it in connection with the vast city of more than a hundred square miles area which we have described. In fact, How and Wells say that the proper reading of Herodotus is that he represents it as a custom of the past.

As to the historian's vivid and detailed description of the women at the temple, the commentators remark that such a thing was not unknown in the ancient east, but Herodotus "is wrong in making universal one single set of rites, those of the goddess Nana at Erech." In plainer English, we know that there were certain parts of the east in its decay where sacred prostitution was enjoined by religion, and we discuss this in a later chapter, "Phallic Elements in Religion." We have further some ground to believe that the custom was in force at the old Babylonian provincial town of Erech.

But we have no other trace of it in Babylonia, and in the great city itself we can say positively that there was no such custom. The law, as I will now describe it, is so severe in regard to sexual offenses, and religious literature ascribes to the gods and goddesses so stern a demand of sexual purity in their worshipers, that the story is now generally abandoned. We have, in fact, even more positive disproof in the marriage-tablets of the women of Babylon, which habitually describe the bride as a virgin. The few modern writers who think that there may have been *one* temple on the outskirts of Babylon with the custom have, apparently, not weighed the evidence. It enormously outweighs the words of Herodotus, who makes frequent mistakes.

THE CODE OF LAWS

We have in the previous section swept aside the oldest and worst calumny of the ancient Babylonians. The absurd story told by Herodotus—absurd in connection with a city almost as large as London—is still repeated constantly in religious works, but it is quite false and is generally relegated by scholars to the department of ancient legends. We have now to get a more positive knowledge of the Babylonian character, and again we shall find a remarkable series of discoveries vindicating the old civilization and actually showing us that Judaism and the Old Testament were deeply indebted to it.

One of these is the discovery of the Babylonian code of laws compiled by King Khammurabi. The Mosaic code of law had hitherto been regarded as, for its age, the most just and original in history: so wonderful, in fact, that millions still believe it to be the outcome of inspiration. Now we have the real source of at least part of its inspiration in a Babylonian code hundreds of

years older than the supposed date of Moses, and sixteen centuries older than the Mosaic laws as we have them! It is, moreover, far more just than the Mosaic code, and implies a far higher degree of civilization. To understand it and its significance let us glance at the earlier history of Babylonia.

In the dim light of the dawn of civilization, six or seven thousand years ago, we find two very different races mingling on the great plain of Mesopotamia. One was a race of beardless men, in some respects like the Mongolians, whom we call the Sumerians or Akkadians. The other was the Semitic race, a type like that of the Jew, which in the end became predominant. The Sumerians seem to have descended upon the plain from the mountains of the northeast—the direction of Asia—and it is clear that they drained the vast marshes, confined the rivers where necessary, irrigated the dry land, and built the first cities.

They also, like the Egyptians, Chinese, and Mexicans, developed a picture-writing (hieroglyphics) which became in time the scrawls on clay tablets which we call the "cuneiform" (wedge-shaped) writing of the Babylonians and Assyrians. The "scribe," if we may call him that, used a slender square wooden pencil, and with this he made indentations on the clay. Thus what had originally been a picture of a bird or a man became a few wedge-shaped lines standing for the same object.

It is interesting to learn that, as scholars have found, the first cities of the Sumerians, such as Eridu and Nippur, the sites of which are now some two hundred miles from the sea, were originally sea-ports. This obviously means that the two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, have formed two hundred miles of land with their silt in the last six thousand years. The interest of the fact is that it suggested to the ancient Sumerians their version of the creation of the world, which is now summarized in the first verses of Genesis. The beginning was a watery waste, and the gods separated the land from the water.

The Sumerians were the great city-builders, agriculturists, and engineers. But from the earliest age we find the Semitic people, probably from Arabia, mingling with them and taking over the work of civilization. I pass over the two thousand years of what we may call elementary or evolving civilization. The people were gathered in a number of city-states and these were generally ruled by the priests. At last arose a Babylonian monarch, Sargon, a Sumerian, who has a peculiar interest in connection with religion.

I have before me, as I am compiling the notes for this work in the British Museum at London, a number of clay tablets, covered with cuneiform writing of the Babylonians and Assyrians. One of these tablets refers to Sargon, the great king. It seems that (for reasons which are left to the imagination) his mother bore him in secret. After the birth she made a little ark or boat of reeds or

rushes, coated it with pitch (which is common in that region) and, placing the babe in it, she set it afloat on the great river. But the child was destined to be a mighty leader, and the gods took care of him. A water-carrier found the ark and reared the child, until the goddess Ishtar saw and fell in love with the youth, and made him king over the land.

You have heard that story before. It is the original of the story of the infancy of Moses! Sargon, who founded Babylon and created the first Babylonian empire, lived thirty-eight hundred years before Christ, or long before the date of the Flood and very near the day of Creation. But we are not interested in his primitive empire. It went to pieces, and there was again a clash of ambitions, a series of small city-states, until about 2160 B. C., when King Khammurabi needed a uniform law to supersede all the different laws of the various states, and he gathered the best of the old Sumerian laws in one great code.

A copy of this code, carved on a black diorite column seven feet high, was found in the ruins of Susa in 1901. Some conqueror of Babylon, apparently about 1100 B. C., had stolen it, and carried it off to the hills. On the upper part of it is a figure of Khammurabi in an attitude of worship before the sun-god Shamash. H. G. Wells in his "Outline of History" says that it is "Hammurabi receiving his code of law from the god." He cannot have read the law very closely, as the king very emphatically says that he made the code himself; and there is no doubt that it is a compilation of the old Sumerian and Semitic laws of the region collected and improved much as Napoleon I adjusted the old laws of Europe in his famous *Code Napoléon*.

The sentiment of justice which inspires the entire code is, in view of its great antiquity, quite remarkable. People who imagine that these old pagan nations lived "in darkness and the shadow of death" will read the clauses of the code with astonishment; and several good English translations are now available. Every conceivable kind of injury or injustice has its separate clause, and the fine or other punishment is assigned with almost mathematical proportion to the delinquency. The relations of husbands and wives are regulated, in a series of forty clauses, with a sense of justice that wives never experienced under any code of laws in Christian Europe during the whole period of its civilization. Slaves are protected against injury, and the rights of the wife against a concubine are severely prescribed.

One of the most astonishing discoveries was that four thousand years ago the Babylonian law laid down a minimum wage for every class of workers in the kingdom: a just enactment, which is in superb contrast to the complete indifference of Christian law to the workers during the last fourteen centuries (the fifth to the nineteenth) of feudalism and exploitation. The boat builder, the

boatman, the agricultural laborer, the herdsman, the driver, the potter, the tailor, the mason, the carpenter—in short, every manual worker, skilled or unskilled, had his wage fixed by law. The agricultural workers were paid in corn, and the artisans had from four to six grains of silver.

But it is impossible to compare this with the modern wage, nor would any economist dream of attempting it. It took the Papacy eighteen hundred years to rise to the height of declaring that a worker had a right to a "living wage" (which the Pope emphatically declined to define more closely); and wicked Babylon, the most calumniated of all the old pagan empires, had a definite wage fixed by law two thousand years before Christ was born, and seven hundred years before Moses. The "laws of Moses" are simply borrowed from the Babylonian code, and are not as just as in that code.

We are, however, chiefly interested here in the light which the code throws upon Babylonian notions of sex-morality; though it must not be supposed that I regard this as equal in importance to the just settlement by law of the relations of employers and employees or of husband and wife, master and slave.

Here again we made an astonishing discovery. Babylon, your religious neighbor will inform you, was "a sink of iniquity," and chastity was unknown in it. One can imagine what his surprise would be, if he could be induced to read such clauses as these in the Khammurabi Code of four thousand years ago:

> 129. If the wife of a man is found lying with another male, they shall be bound and thrown into the water [the Euphrates]; unless the husband lets the wife live, and the king lets his servant live.
>
> 130. If a man has forced the wife of another man, who has not known the male [a child wife] and who still resides in the house of her father, and has lain within her breasts, and he is found, that man shall be slain.

Clause 131 says that if a woman is accused by her husband of adultery and there is no evidence, "she shall swear by the name of god and return into her house." Clause 132 says that if she is accused by others of adultery, "she shall plunge for her husband into the holy river, or clear herself by ordeal." Clause 133 enacts that if a man is taken prisoner, and his wife goes off with another man, though there is food for her in the house, she shall be drowned. The next clause says that if she does this because there is *no* food, "that woman bears no blame." If, says clause 136, a man who had deserted his wife returned and claimed her, though she had married again, she need not go back. For incest with a daughter (154), the sentence was exile. For adultery with one's daughter-in-law, if the son had had relations with her, a man was drowned (155). If the son had not yet had intercourse with the girl, the man (156) was heavily fined, and the girl received her

dowry back and was free to remarry. In case of incest of mother and son, "both of them shall be burned" (157).

The reader will now perceive the full irony of the statement that is constantly being made from pulpits that we "are returning to the morals of ancient Babylon"! Any attempt in any modern civilization to enforce even an approach to the Babylonian law would result in rebellion. Every variety of sexual offense, which is either not punished at all or only visited with a few months' imprisonment in any Christian civilization, was in ancient Babylon punished with death. I must, in fact, defend Babylon, not against looseness in sex-matters, but against an apparently just charge of savage puritanism. These old laws were, as one gathers from clause 129, probably not generally enforced in all their rigor. But they are an eloquent testimony to the Babylonian's stern view of sexual irregularities. Fancy Chicago or New York or London, to say nothing of Rome, Paris, or Madrid, with such laws on its statute-books!

On the other hand, there was a very easy and just law of divorce or remarriage. When we read in one clause that a woman was divorced by the husband merely saying, "she is divorced," we may be inclined to suspect injustice, but other clauses restore the balance. Clause 142 enacts that a woman has only to refuse conjugal rights, which would lead to a judicial inquiry, and, if the man is proven at fault, she takes her dowry and is free to marry again. Many clauses regulate her right to her dowry and other property, and protect her against the intrigues of concubines.

In fine, there are clauses referring to priestesses and other women serving the temples which throw light on the subject. Chilperic Edwards, whose fine translation of this remarkable Khammurabi Code can be bought for half a dollar, tells us that four types of sacred women are mentioned. Two of these are married priestesses, and the following two clauses show how irreproachable their lives had to be:

> 110. If a priestess who has not remained in the sacred building shall open a wine-shop, or enter a wine-shop for drink, *that woman shall be burned.*
>
> 127. If a man has pointed the finger against a priestess or the wife of another man unjustifiably, that man shall be thrown before the judge, and his brow shall be branded.

The other two types of sacred women were, apparently, not married; one is expressly called a "virgin." But, though the law regulates their dowry (which the father should settle on them on devoting them to the temples), it never contemplates the possibility of their having children. I gather from the references that they were "temporary nuns," leaving to marry after a time. Nowhere in the whole law is there the least allusion to sacred prostitution.

Such were the laws which King Khammurabi and his successors often administered in person at the gates of the temples. There were, of course, other courts; and we find an enactment that a judge who has given an unjust verdict shall suffer the same fine or punishment increased twelve-fold, and then be deposed. Let us hear no more about the iniquity of Babylon.

BABYLONIAN PRAYER BOOKS

There are four or five sources from which we may derive a more authoritative account of the ideals of the Babylonians than from the pages of a traveler who, even if he visited Babylon, which is not certain, did not speak the language, and has demonstrably included many serious errors in his narrative.

One source is the code of laws which we have just examined. A second source is the collection of legal documents we have recovered; and of these it is only necessary to say that the most extraordinary engagements are sealed with religious oaths and the marriage contracts habitually describe the bride as a virgin. Another source is the collection of creation-myths and other legends. But the main source is what is broadly called the "temple literature," or ritual: a very large collection of written oracles or forecasts, of magical texts and incantations, and of hymns and prayers.

How we happen to possess this large literature in connection with so ancient a civilization the reader will already understand. There was nothing of the nature of paper or papyrus or parchment in Babylonia. But there was much clay, and, moulded into convenient form of small thick tablets (like tiles) or cylinders, it affords a good surface for the scribe. It is increasingly thought that, as I have often hinted, the Sumerians, the founders of Babylonian civilization, came from the direction of Central Asia; and they had, like the early Chinese, a kind of picture-writing. When clay was adopted as the writing material, these figures or little pictures of objects degenerated into the groups of wedge-shaped marks—cuneiform characters—with which most people will be familiar.

But clay, once baked, may last forever. As a brother-author once remarked in taking the chair for me for a lecture on Babylon: "These ancient authors had one advantage over us—the more you burned their books, the more immortal they became." Hence it is that we have so plentiful a collection of what was written in Babylonia during two thousand years or more: even letters from man or wife, marriage tablets, business contracts, and so on. For the sacred literature and the semi-sacred epics we have the further advantage that great collections of these tablets were made in libraries. Asurbanipal, the greatest king of Assyria, and a most zealous patron of science and letters, formed (about 650 B. C.) an enormous library of tens of thousands of tablets, and we have had the good fortune to recover a large part of this.

The reader must not for a moment suppose that the few documents I can quote here are just isolated texts that may not have been typical. Many volumes of translations of them have been published, and I select only what is entirely representative; and, for the convenience of the reader who wishes to verify these remarkable sentiments, I take the translations mainly from Professor M. Jastrow's admirable "Religion of Babylonia and Assyria." A very much smaller work by Dr. T. Pincher, with the same title, will be found a good summary of Babylonian religion.

As a rule the incantations or exorcisms, the charms or spells with which the priests drove out the devils or combated their influence, are more interesting from the religious than the moral point of view. But some of these incantations are closely allied to prayers. The earliest are mere charms. God is invoked to drive out the devil: the good spirit is asked, in semi-magical formulae, to smite the evil spirit. But as time went on the idea grew that a man's sins had brought the evil upon him, and confession of sin became a condition of recovery.

It is clear from the tablets that the priests came to draw up lists of sins—much like what you will find in Roman Catholic prayer books today—and one of these was read by the priest to the worshiper, so that he might recognize and confess his transgression. They therefore give us the Babylonian moral code. One of them, translated by Professor Jastrow, begins as follows:

> Has he sinned against a god?
> Is his guilt against a goddess?
> Is it a wrongful deed against his master?
> Hatred towards his elder brother?
> Has he despised father and mother?
> Insulted his elder sister?
> Has he given too little? [short weight]
> Has he withheld too much?
> Has he for "no" said "yes"?
> For "yes" said "no"?
> Has he used false weights?
> Has he possessed himself of his neighbor's house?
> Has he approached his neighbor's wife?
> Has he shed the blood of his neighbor?
> Robbed his neighbor's dress?

This code, the same entirely as ours, is couched in dry official language. In the prayers and psalms it so closely approaches ours, or corresponds so wholly to ours, that for use in a modern church very little alteration would be needed. One class of psalms, known as "the Penitential Psalms," and probably recited by priest and penitent when the sin had been confessed, is of particular interest. I reserve for the fourth section the petitions addressed to the goddess Ishtar, and need give here only one or two specimens of the language habitually used. Lines from one are:

Oh that the wrath of my Lord's heart return to
its former condition!
The sin I have committed I know not.
Food I have not eaten;
Clean water I have not drunk.

This "fasting" of the penitent is very frequently mentioned. It seems to have been a constant religious practice of the "depraved" Babylonians; and the Roman Catholic may find that fact as disturbing as the confession of sins to the priest, the imploring of the intercession of "the Queen of Heaven," or the annual celebration of the death and resurrection of a god.

One of their hymns recalls to our minds the Lord's Prayer; and it is still more strongly recalled by the following prayer which King Nebuchadnezzar, on his accession to the throne of Babylon six hundred years before the birth of Christ, or in 604 B. C., addressed to the great sun-god Marduk:

O eternal ruler, Lord of the universe!
Grant that the name of the king whom thou lovest,
Whose name thou hast mentioned, may flourish as seems good to thee.
Guide him on the right path.
I am the ruler who obeys thee, the creation of thy hand.
It is thou who hast created me,
And thou hast entrusted to me sovereignty over mankind.
According to thy mercy, O Lord, which thou bestowest upon all,
Cause me to love thy supreme rule.
Implant the fear of thy divinity in my heart.
Grant to me whatsoever may seem good before thee,
Since it is thou that dost control my life.

Had I the slightest interest in such matters, I would recommend this prayer for the accession-service of the next king of England! Seriously, if these Babylonian hymns and prayers had had the good fortune to be translated into English by the poetic generation which translated the Old Testament, we should hear no more about the superiority of the latter.

There are hundreds of such hymns, scores to Shamash as well as Marduk. Here is one that might have been taken as the very model of the Lord's Prayer, yet the Rev. Professor Sayce, who translates and reproduces it, tells us that it was chanted in the temple of Sin at Ur as long ago as 2500 B. C.:

Father, long-suffering and full of forgiveness, whose hand upholds
the life of all mankind!
First born, omnipotent, whose heart is immensity, and there is
none who may fathom it!
In heaven, who is supreme? Thou alone. . . .
On earth, who is supreme? Thou alone. . . .
As for thee, thy will is made known in heaven, and the angels
bow their faces.
As for thee, thy will is made known upon earth, and the spirits
below kiss the ground.

He is the source of all light and life and strength, the creator and merciful father of all. One prayer runs:

> The law of mankind dost thou direct.
> Eternally just in the heavens art thou;
> Of faithful judgment towards all the world art thou.
> . . . . . .
> O Shamash, supreme judge of heaven and earth art thou.
> . . . . . .
> O Shamash, on this day cleanse and purify the king, the son of his God.
> Whatsoever is evil within him, let it be taken out.

The constant reference in these prayers to the "supremacy" of the one or the other god raises the question of Monotheism. It may be said at once that there was never a time when the whole people of Babylonia believed in the existence of only one god. One wonders if there was ever such a time in Judea. Certainly during nearly the whole period covered by the Old Testament the Jews did not deny the existence of other gods. They merely insisted that Jahveh was supreme and alone worthy of worship. So it was, at different periods of Babylonian history, with Sin, Shamash, or Marduk. A god becomes "unique" only when political circumstances enable his priests to suppress his rivals. That was possible in the little kingdom of Judea. It was not possible in a land where great cities, three thousand years old, with special deities and powerful priesthoods, rivaled the metropolis.

But we have, fortunately, found positive proof that the educated Babylonians were monotheistic four thousand years ago. We have discovered a tablet of about 2000 B. C.—the period when the rise of Babylon made Marduk supreme—in which the other gods are represented as merely different aspects of Marduk. Thirteen of the chief deities of Babylonia (Bel, Sin, Nebo, Nergal, etc.) are thus explained, and the list goes no farther only because the tablet is broken. Monotheism was thus the religion of educated Babylonians seven centuries before Moses, and of educated Egyptians, not much later.

THE LAND OF DEVILS

We turn now to a very different, but equally interesting and illuminating, aspect of Babylonian religious and moral life. We have seen what a land of gods and goddesses it was. We shall now see that it was a land of devils innumerable; and the very source of the weird belief in legions of malignant spirits which, through Judaism, passed on into Christianity. And this side of Babylonian life must be considered here because it is intimately connected with the virtue of the Babylonian people. No one who is acquainted with it can doubt that if, as we saw, adultery was a vice in ancient Babylon, there were more urgent incentives to avoid it than there are in Christendom.

Had, then, the Babylonians a worse hell than that of the

Christian Church? No: no other religion surpasses Christianity in that respect, and very few approach it. The Babylonians seem in their latest days—I should think under Persian influence—to have partially adopted the belief in punishment and reward after death. During practically the whole of their four thousand years' history, they had no idea of reward and punishment beyond the grave. They believed, however, more intensely than most Christians believe in hell, that a man was punished *in this world* for his sins; and, since there was no escape from the penalty before it was felt (as there is in the case of hell), the deterrent was very effective.

There were two foundations of the Babylonian belief. One was their extreme vagueness about life after death. That the mental part of a man survived the body they fully believed. This was the oldest and most deeply ingrained of religious beliefs. But all that the Babylonians knew, though their learned priest speculated much on the subject, was that the dead passed into a dark, dim cave under the earth, Arabu, or the House of Arabu. In the legend of Ishtar, who (as we shall see) "descended into hell," it is said:

> To the land whence there is no return, the land of darkness,
> Ishtar, the daughter of Sin, turned her mind,
> The daughter of Sin turned her mind;
> To the home of darkness, the dwelling of Irhalla,
> To the house whence no one issues who has once entered it,
> To the road from whence there is no return, when once it has been trodden,
> To the house whose inhabitants are deprived of light,
> The place where dust is their nourishment, their food clay,
> They have no light, dwelling in dense darkness,
> And they are clothed, like birds, in a garment of feathers,
> Where, over gate and bolt, dust is scattered.

Here again, we may note in passing, the Babylonians were the teachers of the Jews. Through the greater part of the Old Testament the Jews know only that the dead pass underground to Sheol, "the land of darkness"; and Sheol is only a variant of another Babylonian name for the home of the dead, Shuala. It was only when they came much later under Egyptian and Persian influence that the Jews began to talk of "the spirit returning to God who made it." In the end, when Greek influence fell on them, their educated men began (like the writer of Ecclesiastes) to reject the very idea of immortality. So little question is there of "revelation" in the Hebrew religion; and, as to the "religious instinct," we need not observe that it seems to have taught the early civilizations entirely contradictory things about the most fundamental of religious beliefs!

The Babylonians dreaded this lower world. Their priests avoided mention of it. It was felt that the dead were soured by their gloomy prison underground, and would harm the living. This was one of the primitive roots of the belief in malignant

spirits; and it leads us on to the next basis of Babylonian character—the belief that the gods allowed legions of devils to torment the sinner in this life. One large class of the Babylonian devils has the express title "shades of the dead." Other and more powerful demons are clearly gods of an earlier generation whom a more successful religion has turned into devils. Alongside of the elaborate religion, the virtual Monotheism, of the priests and the educated, Babylonia had plenty of religion in its more primitive stages: spirits of the river, the tree, the field, etc., and countless legions of evil spirits warring against men.

If there is one thing that Christianity owes to Babylon more plainly than another it is the belief in legions of devils. There were countless numbers of them, arranged by the priests in classes for the purpose of exorcism. They lurked by day in dark places, old ruins or groves, or in the desert, at night they set out to torture humanity. Every evil, from a tornado to a toothache, came from them. Most dreaded of all were the "night spirits," Lilu and his wife Lilitu: and it would be profoundly interesting to trace the evolution of Lilitu into Lilith, the "screech owl," the "night monster," of the Jews, the vampire or blood-sucker of the Arabs, the fanciful creature of some of our modern novelists and mystics.

But our material is too vast and our space too small. What we have to notice here is that these immense armies of demons were responsible for every disease and misfortune of the Babylonians. Did a maid show the symptoms of anemia? Obviously Lilu or Lilitu had been busy at night with her body. Did a man or woman have an erotic dream leaving him or her excited and unsatisfied? It was Ardat Lili. Headaches, toothaches, stomachaches—every organ of the body had its demonic tormentors. Fevers (from the marshes), plagues and all pestilences were their work. Even "the evil wind, the terrible wind, that sets one's hair on end" had its demon. Pictorially they were represented as ferocious beings of animal head and human body: the prototypes of our devil pictures. Some were so powerful that they were next to gods. The book Job is thoroughly Babylonian.

It followed that devil-dealers, sorcerers and witches, were very common. They turned on or turned away the "evil eye": they gave magical (and often poisonous) potions: they made little clay or pitch images of your enemy and injured or killed him through that. Dreadful, you say, for so high a civilization! Why, the whole of Europe believed and did these things until modern times. Late in the Middle Ages cardinals sought to kill a pope by getting a sorcerer to make a wax image of him!

What could a man do but appeal to the more powerful spirits, the gods? Hence the immense number of priestly spells, incantations, and exorcisms, to which I have referred. These were at first merely magical formulae (much as you read in the first part of

Goethe's "Faust," which is thoroughly Babylonian). The gods were conjured to drive out the devils. But, as we saw, the ethical note gradually entered. The gods were the "fathers" of all men, they were full of love and mercy, and so on. Why, then, did they permit these demons to torture their children? The answer was as natural as on the lips of a modern preacher. Men had offended the gods by their "sins."

It is curious how religious writers still boast that Christianity invented the sense of "sin." Even if this were true, we should be the reverse of grateful. It has so obscured the real meaning of social law and character that it has actually led to far more "sin," far more injury to men, than there would otherwise have been. At the best it is a morbid illusion. At its commonest it is a fear that the gods will punish a man, just as in ancient Babylon. It is as old as civilization: that is to say, as old as the priesthoods which invented it and profited by it.

CHAPTER IX

Religion and Morals in Ancient Egypt

Life in Ancient Egypt—The Judgment of the Soul—The Morals of the Egyptians—Isis and Horus

Life in Ancient Egypt

UNTIL the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Napoleon took a group of French scientific men to the valley of the Nile, the ancient Egyptian civilization had been to the mass of mankind, like ancient Babylon, just one of the nations which had sat in darkness and the shadow of death until the light of Christ broke upon the world. Scholars knew from Greek literature that Egypt had had a wonderful civilization. The wisest of the Greeks had learned from it. But men and women generally knew nothing of these facts. It was a dogma, created by the priests of the Middle Ages, that there had been no light and no virtue until Judaism gave a dawn, and Christianity the full noonday sun of wisdom, to the world.

There has been a remarkable revolution of opinion. Early astronomers measured the pyramids and thought that they discovered secrets of the universe embodied in those extraordinary constructions five thousand years before science was born. Builders assured us that the Egyptians must have had some art of building which the world has lost. Mystics found profound wisdom in the myths and legends of the ancient people.

The learning of Egypt began to seem quite a miracle in the human chronicle. Theosophists and Freemasons began to trace their profound discoveries or secret rites to the ancient temples on the banks of the Nile. A medical man has recently published a large and expensive work in England in which he contends that Egypt was civilized a million years ago, and the whole of the rest of the world was civilized from that center. Even a brilliant scientific man of our time and his school believe that the Mexican and other far-lying cultures were derived from Egypt.

Egyptian culture is just a natural part of our human evolution, and it contributes to and in part explains the Christian culture which follows. Egypt was neither inferior to Christendom nor equal to the secular civilization of modern times. It had no vast and mysterious antiquity, no miracles of genius or revelation. To

the end its "science" was childish and its legends as ridiculous as those of the Jews; but from the first its ethic was high, and it was based upon beliefs which must startle the average Christian who thinks that his own beliefs are original.

First recall to mind the unique position of Egypt as a land. The valley of the Nile is a dip in the ground, a broad channel cut by the river through the sand and underlying rocks of the desert, a hundred times as long as it is wide. A few miles from the river, on either side, is a cliff-wall. It is the edge of the desert.

Probably the Nile cut this channel when its waters, coming from the lofty mountains to the south, were swollen with the melting ices and snows at the close of the Ice Age; or, rather, at the turn of the Ice Age, for the south would feel the change before Europe. There was no valley of the Nile worth speaking of thirty or forty thousand years ago, so it is preposterous to talk of a million years of civilization.

As the valley floor was formed, or carpeted with soil, by the annually overflowing river, it became a very desirable country to live in. The climate is glorious. The soil, formed from river-mud, is magnificent. And men were just at that time—say, roughly, about ten thousand years ago—learning agriculture. This valley and Mesopotamia were the two most desirable spots in the vast expanse of desert from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean; and man had been driven south by the great ice sheet that covered Europe. There is no mystery about the beginning of civilization in Egypt and Babylonia.

Scholars are not at all agreed as to where the men came from who invaded the valley of the Nile. We are not concerned with that here; so I will only briefly suggest that they were mainly refugees from icy Europe who had been driven still further south by the flooding of the Mediterranean, and that tribes from the eastern deserts, and possibly blacks from the south, mingled with them and fought for the soil. The great length of the Nile valley made it accessible to tribes from many directions: but the narrowness of the valley kept them from mingling as thoroughly as they would on an open plain like Mesopotamia. There you have the material conditions for interpreting the religious development of Egypt: the clash of cultures which made for progress, the isolation which checked the progress in many ways. You understand why Egypt was so early civilized: you understand also certain primitive features of its religion.

Somewhere about 10,000 B. C. tribes from north and south and east pour into the valley. Except where they touch, they know little of each other. The narrow way south or north is choked with tribes. Men in the north know nothing of men fifty miles away. Moreover, men on one side of the river are hostile to men on the other; they are, in great measure, even today. Each, therefore, clings

to its tribal religion, and the valley of the Nile becomes a seething mass, a long chain, of antagonistic peoples, each with its own chief or prince and its own primitive religion.

This helps us to understand the greatest peculiarity of Egyptian religion. Half its gods have animal heads, and we found no such gods in Babylonia. Scholars have to a great extent traced for us the various phases of the life of Egypt, and we begin to understand this. First we have traces of men of the New Stone Age settling on the soil. Of these we have little definite knowledge, but we know their life well in other places and in general it does not concern us here. Their primitive religious ideas, as happened everywhere else, lingered longest, and we picked them up at the dawn of civilization: an intense belief in survival, a great deal of magic and demonism, and a readiness to imagine spirits throughout nature—in trees, stones, rivers, etc.

This state of things passes gradually into primitive civilization: which was no miracle of genius, but a slow process stretching over two thousand years. Villages grew into towns. Chiefs became petty kings; and, as they levied tribute in corn, their servants scrawled so many baskets on the mud-wall of a peasant's hut. In such ways picture-writing began. Pottery, weaving, and agriculture improved. "Civilization" opened.

The peculiarity of the religious development is that at first most of the "gods" are animals. The primitive Egyptians revere the bull in one place, the ram in another, the hawk in another, and so on. Some writers call this "totemism": which should mean that a tribe thought it had some genealogical or mystic connection with a bull or ram, and took it as the sacred symbol of that tribe. Others think—it seems more likely—that it was a result of Animism. Remember how religion develops: Man first believes in his own "soul." Then, since things move in nature, he puts spirits in those: in the growing tree, the rolling stone, the rushing stream, etc. At first he "animates" everything that moves. Later he selects things that show special vitality and thinks them the abodes of particularly powerful spirits. It is not difficult on those lines to understand how the various tribes would pick out the hawk, the baboon (considered remarkable for its air of wisdom!), the vulture, the bull, the cow, the ram, the lioness, the crocodile, the cat, and so on.

Priesthoods grew round these semi-deities, in the way we have described; and in each tribe one spirit-animated animal gets pushed by its priests to a commanding position. The crocodile, the hawk, or the bull becomes the really great power: that is to say, the animal through or in which the great spirit manifests itself. At this stage, at the beginning of Egyptian history—which is generally put at about 3300 B. C.—the statues of the gods are animal-statues, and they have special names and strong priesthoods.

It is not so ridiculous as it looks when one is in a museum.

In the fiery and fertile lands of Egypt it was easy for a primitive mind to imagine that the hawk, the lioness, or the bull had a very powerful spirit in it. People did not suppose that somewhere in the heavens there was a goddess with a cow's head, a god with a hawk's head, and so on. It is really the advance—the putting of the animal's head on a human body—that makes it look ridiculous. But bodies of primitive worshipers, whether in ancient Egypt or modern Tennessee, resist changes, and keep as much of the old as they can.

However, all Egyptian gods did not have an animal origin. I sketch the development as follows:

(1) Belief in Shadow or Soul
(2a) Animism and Fetishism (2b) Ancestor-Worship
(3a) Deification of sun, moon, etc. (3b) Deified ancestors
(4) Polytheism
(5) Monotheism
(6) Atheism

What Egyptologists tell us is quite in accordance with this. A very large number of the Egyptian deities were deified animals, or the outcome of Animism. But some—the great god Osiris particularly—never had an animal form. Some of these, and they were very old deities, were nature-gods: Horus and Ra and other sun-gods, Seb the earth-god, Neith the sky-goddess, and so on. Osiris, on the other hand, is said in Egyptian legend to have once been king of the country, and most scholars believe that this is a case of deification of an ancestor. Later, other gods were added to the pantheon as the spirits of abstract ideas (of love, of war, of writing, of truth, and so on).

THE JUDGMENT OF THE SOUL

Let us now take up the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, because it is in the development of this that the Egyptians differed most from contemporary civilizations, and it is this which most profoundly, from the very beginning, influenced the life of the people.

I have observed that the actual historical development of religion no more confirms the theory that we have a "religious instinct" than does our own experience. Let me repeat this, as the theory is a very popular theme of the new or "liberal" religion of our time. Religious believers who know the facts of science and history—which merely means, the truth about nature and man—abandon all the old arguments and entrench themselves in a psychological position which they believe to be quite scientific and impregnable. It is as feeble and transient as all the arguments that have captivated the religious mind since the days of Pythagoras and Plato.

I have pointed out how utterly inconsistent it is with the facts

of life today. This supposed religious sense gives believers a hundred different versions of religion; and it generally fades away in proportion to the intelligence and knowledge of the individual. We are now seeing how inconsistent it is with religious history in the past. It tells the Babylonians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Romans, and (apparently) the Cretans that the immortality of the soul is a negligible ancient belief to which they need pay no practical attention; and it tells the Egyptians and Persians that the future life is of such profound importance, and is so definitely known, that it must entirely over-shadow this life. It tells all these nations that god or gods certainly exist and must be worshiped; and it tells the sages of Asia, Buddha and Kong-fu-tse, that the belief in gods is a negligible ancient idea to which a wise man will pay no practical attention! "Modernism" is as vulnerable as Fundamentalism. The life of Egypt seems at first sight to have been one long preoccupation about the future life. I might be reminded that we have, on the other hand, a remarkable and exceptionally full knowledge of the daily life of the people. We have stores of the actual furniture of their houses: down-cushions, chairs, couches, and so on. We have the child's toys, the workman's tools, the scribe's implements, the housewife's cooking utensils. We have, painted or carved, innumerable scenes from the festive or solemn or tragic experiences of the people; scenes of life in the palace and the cottage and the workshops. We have extraordinarily life-like statues of the people themselves, of almost every class of society. But nearly the whole of these treasures have come from tombs, and so we are led back to their belief in the after-life.

Sir Flinders Petrie gives us a shrewd warning in this connection. It is largely by accident that we have such a mass of evidence from tombs and so little from homes of the living. The homes of the earlier Egyptians, the very floors of their towns and villages, are buried under twenty feet of Nile mud. Every year the river overflows and, when it subsides again, leaves a thin layer of fertilizing mud over the land. So we have to dig for the old sites; and most of them are now buried under new towns, new villages, new corn fields. The tombs, on the contrary, are naturally on raised land at the edge of the desert, and we have only to break them open.

Yet it is true that no other nation in history ever showed such an intense concern about the future life; and the main reason for it startles simple-minded believers of modern times. The Persians believed in a Day of Judgment, when God (their one great god, Ahura Mazda) would destroy the earth, summon before him the souls of all men who had ever lived, reward the good and punish the living. It is clearly from Persia that certain sects of the Jews, and Christ and the early Christians, borrowed

this idea of (in Persian language) "the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Roman Catholics, and in a less explicit way other Christians, believe in two judgments of the dead: the Particular Judgment (of each soul after death) and the General Judgment (of all men at the close of the human comedy). Roman Catholics, I find, are astounded and embarrassed to learn that this particular judgment of each soul after death was the most outstanding and most influential belief of the ancient Egyptians from the very dawn of history, and probably long before it.

It would be a fascinating task to attempt to trace in an intelligible fashion the evolution of such ideas in the light of the new scientific principles of history. Some of our great Egyptologists, like Professor Breasted and Sir Flinders Petrie, do apply these principles in some measure to the general development of Egyptian life, but comparatively little has been done. We want to know what there was in the environment of Egypt—let us drop all notion that special germ-plasm or special genius or instinct explains any of these things—which shaped their belief in gods so predominantly in the direction of deified animals: what there was that, in such contrast to the neighboring civilization in Babylonia, gave them this very definite and practical idea of a future life and an ethical judgment after death.

The Egyptians were peculiar once more in their conception of the nature of man. He had a body and a soul, and he had a third something, which they called the *ka*. In fact, as time went on the "immaterial" part of man was broken up into a number of principles which puzzle the most learned Egyptologists. There was the *khu*, the soul proper, the intelligence. Then there was the *ka*, or double, the seat of sense and perception, so closely allied to the body that it was almost regarded as an ethereal counterpart of it, even as a sort of guardian angel. There was also the *ba*, vaguely conceived as a disembodied soul, winged like a bird and flitting about the tombs and cemeteries at night. Moreover, there were other fanciful abstractions—an essence of the heart, of the navel, and so on—and the confusion of all these in what remains of Egyptian thought gives a big task to the expert.

With all this we are not concerned in detail. I suggest that in the mist of prehistoric times, when tribes from very different parts were mingling, three different ideas of the soul were adopted. The *ka* seems to be the original conception of the soul: the shadow or reflection or double of the body. The *khu* is a more advanced idea of it, when men learn to reflect on the mind. The *ba* is an idea suggested to some primitive folk by the white owls that fly solemnly and mysteriously about the graveyards in that part of the world at night. The other elements are abstract ideas of a later date.

There is a curious analogy, which has not been noticed, in advanced Greek thought and Roman Catholic philosophy. Aristotle distinguished three kinds of souls or immaterial principles: a vegetative soul (for functions of a plant-nature), an animal (non-intelligent) soul, and a human or intelligent soul. This idea was taken over (with scores of others) from the Moors of Spain who followed Aristotle, by the schoolmen of the Middle Ages, and it is still taught in Catholic philosophy. For instance, stories of the growth of a corpse's beard or nails, after the soul has departed, are explained by saying that the "vegetative soul" still lingers and can promote these "plant-like" growths!

The *ka* or double of the Egyptians has proved very important for us. During life it clung to a man like his shadow (from which it was doubtless derived), and after death it remained in the tomb with the mummy. But a disembodied shadow, it was felt, must be uncomfortable, and life-like statues of the deceased, in wood and stone, were put in the tomb with the mummy. The more life-like they were, the happier the poor *ka* would be; so right early in Egyptian history we get most wonderful and beautifully carved statues of the dead—of relatively poor workers as well as nobles—the eyes often filled in with enamel and quicksilver. In this way the earliest Egyptians are brought vividly before us.

Moreover, the *ka* could enjoy pictures, toys, models of food, and so on. The insides of the tombs were therefore richly painted and carved with scenes from daily life, and the little treasures of the dead poor or of a dead king were (as we saw lately in the case of Tut-ankh-amen) stored in it. To the *ka* we owe an immense amount of our remarkable knowledge of the Egyptians who built the great pyramids five thousand years ago.

But we will now ignore these distinctions and speak only of the "soul." From the very earliest times the Egyptians kept the primitive belief in survival very definite and vivid. At first the dead were supposed, vaguely, to go to the misty and little known region in the Delta where Osiris had his sea. As this became better known, the home of the dead was located in Syria. When travel made it plain that the dead were not *there*, they were located in the sky: a happy garden of Osiris, watered by the celestial Nile (the Milky Way).

Even before the dawn of history, however, the Egyptians believed that a man's soul went to live with the gods (or the god Osiris), and its qualifications for such high company had to be considered. A king might get the laws stretched a little—"The Almighty would never damn a man of *his* quality," as the French lady said of a wicked noble who had recently died—but other folks had to be "clean." Mummifying the body is not an original Egyptian practice. Very early we find a weird practice of cutting off the head and limbs, stripping the flesh from the bones, *cleaning*

the bones, and then putting the human wreck together again to be buried. Thus was the naughty boy or girl cleaned to go into the presence of a god: and I am not sure that it is not a better idea than the Catholic belief in a horrible period of torment in Purgatory (or "purging fire")!

The next and most important question is: What were the sins which disqualified the Egyptian? Obviously this intense belief in a future life of eternal happiness, which would be forfeited by sin, had a profound influence. We saw that the Babylonian ethical scheme was just as formidable in its way, but the Egyptian must have been even more effective than the medieval belief in hell and heaven. Priests, of course, professed to get forgiveness of sin during life; but there was in Egypt nothing like the mathematical insurance-scheme, so to say, of the Roman Catholic Church.

Here we are well informed, because what is sometimes called the Egyptian bible, and commonly called the "Book of the Dead," gives us the full code of conduct by which the soul was judged. Thoth, the assistant of Osiris who took down the record of a man's deeds, was the wisdom-god of Egypt, the scribe of the great gods; and what we call the "Book of the Dead" was a collection of writings known to the Egyptians as "the Book of Thoth."

Here there is an amusing parallel to the behavior of the Jewish priests. In Chap. lxiv of the "Book of the Dead" it is stated that the volume was discovered at On (or Heliopolis), and it was found to be "in the very handwriting of the god." Thoth had, of course, taken it down from the dictation of the older and greater gods! This was not the only fabrication of the Egyptian priests. Every legend about the gods was touched up and altered by them to meet every new theological need.

As in Judea, however, the priests worked up older material. Sir E. A. W. Budge, the highest authority on the "Book of the Dead," and one of the most learned living Egyptologists, tells us ("The Book of the Dead") that it is "certain" that the book goes back beyond 3000 B. C. In its complete form the collection included forty-two books and dealt with theology, cosmogony, and all kinds of ecclesiastical rules. The part we have is essentially concerned with the long and arduous journey of the soul after death; and most of it is tiresome reading.

THE MORALS OF THE EGYPTIANS

We have now to consider Egyptian morals. There were in early times no "social" works dissecting the practices of the people. Where, as in the case of Rome, there were character-sketches which have come down to us, the darker of them (Juvenal and Ammianus Marcellinus) are no darker than contemporary descriptions of Roman Christians, and are far less reliable. Moralists have a

way of being extremely immoral in the matter of truthfulness. So we do not much miss sermons and moralizers. We deduce the morals of Egypt from its ideals and from the incentives to observe them. If an eternal reward for good conduct and annihilation for evil conduct are not sufficient incentives, then the Christian has little reason to speak.

There is, in fact, a sufficient Egyptian literature for our purpose apart from the "Book of the Dead"; fortunately for our conception of the Egyptian people. From the texts of the "Book of the Dead" which are inscribed everywhere, and from the accident, of which I spoke, that the homes of the Egyptians lie under twenty feet of mud while their tombs are more accessible, we are apt to imagine the nation as brooding somberly all their lives upon the terrors of death. Let me correct that impression by quoting from Professor Steindorff's "Religion of the Ancient Egyptians" a funeral song which he describes as "very old and popular":

> The gods [kings] who were in past times rest in their pyramids.
> The noble also and the wise are buried in their pyramids.
> They that built houses, their place is no longer.
> Thou seest what is become of them. . . .
> No one comes thence to tell us what is become of them.
> To tell us how it fares with them, to comfort our heart.
> Until thou approachest the place whither they are gone.
> Forget not to glorify thyself with joyful heart,
> And follow thy heart as long as thou livest.
> Lay myrrh upon thy head; clothe thyself in fine linen,
> Anointing thyself with the truly marvelous things of god.
> Adorn thyself; make thyself as fair as thou canst;
> And let thy heart sink not.
> Follow thy heart and thy joy.
> As long as thou livest upon earth;
> Trouble not thy heart until the day of mourning come upon thee.
> With joyous countenance keep a day of festival, and rest not in it;
> For no one takes his goods with him;
> Yea, no one returns that is gone hence.

One would almost say that there is a note of healthy skepticism in the song! Certainly, in many places it recalls the wisest book of the Old Testament, Ecclesiastes.

A nearer or more recognizable approach to liberality of thought is found in certain moral treatises which have been found amongst the remains of ancient Egypt. The writers seem (as Sir E. A. W. Budge expressly contends in his recent book "Tutankhamen") to have been monotheistic quite early in Egyptian history. The popular gods are rarely mentioned, and then only with the kind of graceful gesture with which a learned Greek might speak of Zeus and Aphrodite. The writers speak of "God," using a word that implies an eternal deity behind the gods of the priests. It is enough to say that even their one "God" is not very prominent. The writers lay little or no stress on duties to God, and they seem

often to mention him in much the same way as Kong-fu-tse, the great Chinese Agnostic, occasionally spoke of "the will of heaven."

The writers of these little treatises are educated or middle-class Egyptians, and the best known work of the kind is entitled "The Maxims of Ptah-hetep." It is written on a papyrus kept in the British Museum at London. Naturally, such works cannot easily be dated, and this is put by different scholars at dates so wide apart as 3500 B. C. and 1800 B. C. Even if it belongs to the earlier date, we must remember it is far earlier than any fragment of Hebrew literature; but Professor E. Amelineau, the leading authority on it, is convinced that it goes back to the very earliest period of Egyptian history.

In the manuscript or papyrus (the "Prisse Papyrus") which we have there is also a part of a book giving counsels or rules of conduct to judges, teachers, and other men of what we now call the middle class. This fragment is quite in keeping with the writings of Ptah-hetep, and the latter will suffice for our purpose. The title is like the title of some of the Hebrew books, an assumed name. Ptah-hetep was an early Egyptian king, and his name was borrowed, as that of Solomon was borrowed later; though in the Egyptian case we must remember that the work became part of no bible, and there was no deceit.

There are Egyptologists who express a regret that the little book is not more spiritual, and that it does not speak of "sin" and "virtue" and "repentance." Probably the modern reader will appreciate it more on that account. It has something of the practical and humanitarian quality of the Chinese moral works. In fact, it is so far divorced from the priests and the temples that I would —as far as its ideals are concerned—be tempted to compare it with the most beautifully written essays in our own time of Maurice Maeterlinck.

Amelineau himself makes a complaint which at first sight seems to reflect on the moral ideal of these ancient Egyptians. The book completely ignores the poor, he says, as if they did not exist. That should not surprise us. Egypt was a drastic feudal monarchy, and the workers were by no means cared for by law as they were in Babylon. But such sentences as the following warn us not to exaggerate this defect:

> If a man wishes to live by terrifying others, God will take the bread from his mouth. . . . It is the will of God that we cause men no fear.
>
> Justice is great, unchangeable, assured; it has not been disturbed since the age of Osiris [as a king].
>
> The limits of justice are immovable.
>
> Be not puffed up on account of thy science; speak equally with the ignorant and the learned, for the barriers of art are not yet known.
>
> If thou art great after having been of little account, if thou art rich after having been poor, if thou art at the head of thy city, put on one side [the fact] that thou hast reached the first rank. Harden not thy heart because of thy elevation, for thou hast become the steward of

> God's property." Put not at the back of thy head him who was thy equal, but be a companion to him.
>
> Command only in order to direct: if thou art despotic, thou goest toward evil. Let thy thoughts be neither haughty nor base.
>
> Treat thy people as well as thou canst: it is the mark of those favored by God.
>
> Let the love thou feelest pass into the heart of those whom thou lovest: cause all men to be loving and obedient.

The last sentence is a variance with those who think the "Maxims" cold and business-like. They give the Golden Rule of Kong-fu-tse almost in the more tender language of Buddha. Put that rule together with the soul's protestation before Osiris, "I have inflicted no pain," and you have as high a rule of life as any religion ever taught, and higher than most religions have taught.

The writer, though quite unsystematic in his reflections, comes at last to speak of a man's "rule"—the Egyptians had not a word corresponding to "duty"—as regards his wife. "She will be doubly attached if the chain is sweet to her," he says. And the word "chain" must not be misunderstood. Women were just as free and honored in ancient Egypt (as I have shown in my "Woman in Political Evolution") as in ancient Babylon and (apparently) in ancient Crete. During the whole of the three millennia before Christ woman was free and equal to man in all the great civilizations. Nowhere, until we come to Greece and Rome, do we find anything remotely approaching the long subjection of women under Christianity or the least need for any kind of woman-movement. Women were as free as men in ancient Egypt, and had their own property.

A few more quotations, taken from the translations of Professor Amelineau or Sir E. A. W. Budge may be added to those I have given:

> The daily bread is under the dispensation of God ["Give us this day our daily bread"]. When thou plowest, labor in the field that God hath given thee.
>
> If thou wouldst be a perfect man, make thy son pleasing to God.
>
> Wisdom is more difficult to find than the emerald, for the emerald is found by slaves amongst pegmatite rocks.
>
> As to the vivacity of an ardent heart, moderate it; the temperate man penetrates obstacles.
>
> The man who is busy all day has not a good moment; and the man who enjoys himself all day will not keep his fortune.

These sentences will suffice for my purpose. Four thousand years ago, at least, probably five thousand years ago, educated Egyptians were monotheistic and had the same code of conduct as we have. Nowhere in the whole of this little treatise is there any appreciable difference in sentiment from the code of the corresponding class in our time.

There is thus no doubt whatever that the notion that a higher

ethic came into the world two thousand or even three thousand years ago is entirely false. But I have mentioned the feudalism of the Egyptian system and Professor Amelineau's complaint about ignoring the poor, and it may be thought that in this respect—social justice—the Egyptians were far behind. What I have quoted, however, from the "Book of the Dead" shows clearly enough that they understood even the social implications of justice; and, if we turn for a moment to a different kind of Egyptian literature, we shall see it even more clearly.

Curiously enough, it is in the pages of Professor Amelineau himself that we get this evidence best. In one of the finest works (in French) on Egyptian ethics he reminds us that the epitaphs on the earliest tombs echo and confirm the protestations of the "Book of the Dead." "None was miserable in my time: none was oppressed in my days," is on a prince's tomb. On the tomb of a provincial governor is written:

> He lowered the shoulder of the proud: he shortened the hour of the cruel; he was the husband of the widow and the refuge of the orphan.

Other inscriptions are:

> He was the father of the orphan, the husband of the widow, the eye of the blind, the foot of the lame.
>
> He gave bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothed the naked.
>
> He was exempt from all vice, virtuous in all his thoughts; there was no guile in him.

I do not suggest for a moment that the men over whose remains these things were written were as virtuous as they are described. Many a man of our time would, if he could return to earth, be amazed to see what his wife had had carved on his tombstone, or the press had written in his obituary notice.

But unquestionably these inscriptions, which go back to about 3000 B. C., give us the Egyptian ideal. Three millennia before the Sermon on the Mount is supposed to have been written its finest contents were commonplaces in Egypt! The seven works of mercy were required of a man by Osiris. The very phrases at times sound like the phrases of the New Testament.

ISIS AND HORUS

Osiris, a very old Egyptian god, generally regarded as a deified king of the prehistoric period, was turned by the priestly legend-makers into a son of the oldest and discarded gods, and brother of Set. Their sisters were Isis and Nephthys. This was the usual way of adjusting the claims of rival deities when political fusion brought their worshipers under one head.

But quite early, in the very dawn of history, it was represented that Set had killed his brother-god Osiris. The story is, of

course, quite childish, a long tissue of ridiculous adventures. Set gave a banquet and, producing a beautiful chest or cabinet, said that he would give it to any person present who would lie in it. Osiris took up the challenge, and the conspirators nailed down the lid and poured molten lead on it. It was put on the river and drifted out to the Asiatic coast.

Then began the adventures of Isis in search of the body of her brother and husband (a subsidiary legend said that they had been married in the womb!) until she found it in Syria. She had a sort of intercourse with the relevant part of the dead body, and in this way—a kind of virgin birth—Horus was conceived. Then she hid the body, but Set found it and tore it into fourteen pieces, which he buried in different parts (a kindly legend of the priests to explain why there were fourteen rival "graves of Osiris" in Egypt). Isis renewed her adventures, and recovered the fourteen parts. Seeing her grief, the great god Ra (who had meantime been adopted in Egypt and had to be given an important part) restored to life Osiris, and he passed to the underworld to be lord and judge of the dead.

As far as Osiris is concerned, the legend interests us because his death was annually celebrated with long and very popular ceremonies. A figure of him was laid on a bier, with corn sprouting round it; or corn was actually planted in the figure and grew out of it. On this account Sir J. G. Frazer, as is well known, interprets the ceremony as a celebration of the annual death and rebirth of the vegetation-god. Egyptologists are far from agreed on that. But it seems to me probable that in early religion the annual death and rebirth of the sun would not be very precisely distinguished from the annual death and rebirth of vegetation. The main point is that for several millennia before the time of Christ all Egypt annually celebrated the cruel death and restoration to life of a god who became the judge and recorder of the dead.

Isis naturally shared the popularity of Osiris. During the greater part of Egyptian history she was rather a private or domestic deity, without great temples. She was the model spouse, the model mother: with the women the most popular figure of the Egyptian "holy family." Late in Egyptian history her importance grew so much that temples were built to her, and her cult spread as far as Rome. It is false to say either that any occult learning was associated with her, as Theosophists say, or that any immorality was associated with her cult. Roman writers tell us that devotees of Isis were quite ascetic; and we know that in Egypt the worship of her was in the latest period associated with a cult of virginity and asceticism. She ended her long career as the predecessor and prototype of the Christian Mary.

Her son Horus interests us in another way. An early Christian work, the "Paschal Chronicle" (Migne ed. xcii, col. 385), tells

us that every year the temples of Horus presented to worshipers, in mid-winter (or about December 25th), a scenic model of the birth of Horus. He was represented as a babe born in a stable, his mother Isis standing by. Just in the same way is the birth of Christ dramatized today in every Roman Catholic church in the world on December 25th. The Roman writer Macrobius makes the same statement about the representation of the birth of Horus in the temples (Saturnalia, I., 18), and adds that the young god was a symbol of the rebirth of the sun at that date. The fact is, at all events, beyond question. We are brought to the very threshold of Christianity. The whole world by the year 1 A. D. was familiar with the Egyptian statues or pictures of Isis with the divine babe Horus in her arms.

CHAPTER X

Life and Morals in Greece and Rome

The Glory That Was Greece—Morals of the Athenians—The Development of Religion—Rise of Philosophy and Skepticism —The Splendor That Was Rome—Morals in Ancient Rome

The Glory That Was Greece

IN the summer of 1922 I spent five weeks in Athens; and it would not be far from the truth to say that I spent those weeks in ancient, not modern, Athens. Day after day I mounted the hill, the Acropolis, the center of the ancient city, which today proudly bears the bleached bones of the most superb buildings that this earth has ever seen. While all Athens slept its noonday sleep, I sat on some stone on the flat summit of the hill, in the full blaze of the August sun, and drank the beauty of the shattered marble frame of the Temple of the Virgin, the Parthenon.

Even in its ruin, discolored by two thousand years of time, the Parthenon will thus hold a lover of beauty for days. No photograph conveys an impression of its massive symmetry, its blended air of strength and moderation, its princely form and exquisite detail. It is a small building, compared with the temples of Egypt or the great cathedrals of Europe or the mosque of Cordova: yet its glorious facade towered above me, shining dully like old gold in the fierce sunlight, framed in the brilliant blue of a cloudless sky with a majesty that is indescribable. The spirit of Paganism seemed, by some strange error, to mistake me for a Christian, and to smile, as one does at a child, out of the marble stones at my pride in the works of Christendom.

I picture the temple as we know it to have been in old times, and down the ages until, in the seventeenth century, red-hot Christian cannon-balls falling upon Turkish powder, wrecked this wonder of the world. It stood about sixty feet high, an exquisitely simple, square building of a delicately veined white marble, its stones so skilfully put together that it looked like a single carving from some giant block. One could not see the lines between the separate stones of its mighty columns; and so wonderful was the genius of the architect that every line of the structure is so cunningly waved that the temple looks more graceful and symmetrical than it would if the lines were straight. Above, on the

triangular pediment, was a great group of figures—representing the birth of Athene—carved in the finest-grained white marble by the most consummate artist the world has ever known, Phidias. At the back was a corresponding group; and both giant pieces of superb sculpture, in pure white marble of Paros, gleamed against a background of brilliant red. Round the temple ran a high carved frieze, the Athenian procession in honor of Athene, with blue background, every fragment of which is now a priceless work of art.

I imagine myself entering, twenty-three hundred years ago, with a group of wandering scholars from Egypt or Persia or Chaldea. There were no windows. The light streamed through the great open door and lit the simple hundred-foot-long interior. At the end was a statue of Athene, forty feet high, carved by the master Phidias out of ivory, vested in the most magnificent robes and accoutered in pure gold. The arms and decoration used up seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of gold.

Out in the open, on the partially leveled summit of the hill, was a bronze statue of Athene, thirty feet high, the spear of the warrior maiden—she was goddess of war as well as wisdom—glinting in the sun and catching the eye forty miles out at sea. On one side of the hill was another beautiful marble temple, the Erechtheum, in archaic style. There were old sacred treasures of the people to be preserved—the stone, for instance, that bore the authentic mark of Father Neptune's trident— and the more liberal-minded artists of the new generation built this second temple to accommodate them. And the gateway to the hill itself was a massive and lofty marble portico, or series of arches, of great beauty.

I look out from the hill, five hundred feet high, in an air still so pure that I see the lines of the mountains forty miles away and the bays of the Mediterranean shining blue in the folds of the picturesque coast. Down below me, all round the hill, was the ancient city.

Yonder is the field, with unadorned stone platform, where the first democracy in the world held the first parliament. Not far away is the stadium, the sport-ground of two thousand years ago, so solidly built that fifty thousand people sit in it today to watch modern sport and hardly see that it is an ancient building. On the slope of the Acropolis itself, carved out of the rock, is the ancient theater, where thirty thousand Athenians used to witness, in the open air, the greatest comedies and tragedies that man ever produced. Beyond are a few relics of the great temple of Jupiter, once girt by more than a hundred superb marble columns. Below the other side of the hill is a temple, the Theseum, so well preserved that it looks only a century or two old. It rises now in a squalid

quarter, like a lady of the Russian nobility in a slum of Sofia, and the children play hide and seek in its porches.

Of the city, of secular Athens, apart from the theater and the stadium, hardly a stone remains. It is always temples of false gods on which man lavished most of his devotion and resources! But at least in Athens there is no palace of king or emperor to tell of the second great waste of human effort—on royalty.

We know that the central square of the city, the Agora, the cattle-market of more primitive Athens, was lined with lovely buildings. Along two sides were the civic structures, of handsome limestone, carved by these great masters of the chisel. On the other two sides were colonnades, where one might find shelter from the sun. One had its inner walls painted—Greeks called it the "Stoa Poikile"—and philosophers used to squabble and teach in its shade; and, in fine, it gave birth to the finest non-religious system of morals—I mean the most austere system—that the world ever produced: the Stoic philosophy. "Stoa" is the Greek for Colonnade; and it was here that Zeno anticipated Christ in his moral fanaticism.

Thus one quick survey from the summit of the Acropolis assures you that when literary men speak of the genius of ancient Greece, or of "meteoric" Athens, they use no exaggeration. Athens was a human miracle of achievement. There is hardly any field of human thought and endeavor in which the Athenians did not rise to the greatest height in the very dawn of European civilization.

Ask any architect where were the finest structures that the hand of man ever put together? In ancient Athens. Ask a philosopher where was the greatest series of thinkers the world has ever known? In ancient Greece, chiefly Athens. Ask a literary man where the best verse and prose, the best comedy and tragedy, were created? Ancient Greece. Ask a politician—no, that would be useless: ask a sociologist—where the most rapid and brilliant political evolution, from monarchy to complete democracy, took place? Ancient Athens. Ask who invented the theater, the gymnasium, the stadium, the public hall, the science of ethics or politics? The ancient Greeks.

We surpass them only in science and the application of science; yet even here the earliest Greek thinkers provided magnificent foundations, and it was the one great error of Athens to turn to "spiritual" things and philosophy and neglect to build on scientific truth which they first discovered.

I have shown how paltry was the science of the Egyptians; and how puny a conception of the universe the most learned of the Babylonians had, after three thousand years' contemplation of the heavens. But the Greeks had hardly been civilized a few centuries when they discovered, or guessed, three great fundamental

truths of science: the vastness of the universe, the existence of atoms, and the law of evolution. If Aristotle, one of the greatest intellects of all time, had worked only on scientific lines, science would have been largely developed two thousand years ago. And if the Christian Church had not subsequently crushed all science, we should live now the wonderful life that our descendants will live in the year 3000.

To the historians of all later time this genius, or "meteoric" brilliance, of the Greek intellect has always been a mystery. If the Hebrews had had one-half of the brilliance of the Greeks we should be reminded of it in every sermon. It would be a miracle, an outcome of revelation and inspiration. But the Hebrews, though tutored by two ancient civilizations, show not one-tenth the achievements of the Greeks; and it has ever mystified scholars that the first European nation to become civilized should, a few centuries after its initiation to civilization, reach the high-water mark in nearly every branch of culture. One has only to reflect on the language we use today to realize the world's debt to little Greece. Philosophy, ethics, politics, esthetics, democracy, gymnastics, athletics, music, theater, chorus, comedy, tragedy—these and a thousand others are Greek words, because they stand for things which the Greeks invented or discovered.

To talk of the "genius" of the Greeks is mere mysticism; and it is only a new kind of mysticism when certain writers speak about the wonderful "germ plasm" of the Greek race. These are words and phrases. They conceal the need for real explanation. Nor can the explanation be given by, as older writers did, reflecting on the glorious climate, the picturesque world, the blue sky and the blue sea and golden sun, of the Greeks. Greece is scorched brown during most of the year and powdered thick with dust. It is arm-chair philosophers who imagine it a land of perpetual flowers and fresh green foliage. In any case, the sun and sea and hills are the same now as they were two thousand years ago, and they inspire no genius.

It is a good opportunity to point out the real value of the kind of explanation which we now call "scientific." It simply means real explanation instead of verbiage and mysticism. The explanation is given in realities, not phrases. That is why it is so deadly to old thought. We either point out the real agencies at work or we candidly confess that we have not yet discovered them.

Now, we have not yet discovered the whole secret of the Greeks, but a very little sketch of their history will show that we have made a considerable advance. The Greeks, Romans, Teutons, Celts, and Slavs are one family, and the ancestral tribe lived somewhere in the Caucasus district during the Ice Age. It moved northward as the ice melted and forests full of game spread over Europe.

But the section of the race which was to give birth to the Greeks soon turned south and made its way across the mountains to the land we now call Greece.

Here our discovery of the ancient civilization of Crete has greatly helped us. The earliest Greeks, powerful barbarians with iron weapons, destroyed Crete. Half the Cretan race fled to Asia Minor, where they had long ago founded colonies; and in time large numbers of the Greeks crossed the narrow sea to Asia Minor and learned civilization from them. Nearly all the early poets and scientists of Greek literature belong to Asia Minor.

That is part of the explanation. Athens, in the extreme east of Greece, was sheltered from the barbaric waves which continued to pour south; and it was also very conveniently situated for communication with Asia Minor. The physical circumstances, as usual, explain more than germ plasm or genius or religion does. But until the fifth century Athens had only a moderate civilization, with no outstanding achievements except the abolition of royalty and the creation of democracy—the first democracy in history. This does not puzzle us. Such a change was comparatively simple in a small community like that of the Athenians, but quite impossible in rigorously organized monarchies with millions of people and vast armies of mercenary soldiers.

For this, remember, is part of the wonder of Athens. It was not an empire; we may ignore the sort of small empire it had in its degenerate days. Athens was a city-state: a single city with a moderate amount of the surrounding country. And it never had more than a population of about four hundred thousand, of whom three-fourths were slaves. In effect, a city of one hundred thousand men and women produced all the talent we have seen; and all their glorious creations were achieved with a treasury of only about eleven million dollars, the cost of a big modern hotel!

What was it that so inspired Athens in the fifth century? It was the correct learning of the lesson of a terrific defeat and then the avoidance of war for a century. The Persians completely destroyed the old Athens in 479 B. C., and the Athenians, in rebuilding, were fortunate enough to secure a statesman who was also a thinker and an artist. Pericles proposed that they should raise on the ashes of the older Athens the most beautiful city in all the world; and that they succeeded will be told in the world's literature until the end of time. Never again will such artistic and literary wonders be crowded into one century by so small a people.

So we, largely at least, understand Athens. One of H. G. Wells' many errors about the Greeks—A. W. Gomme has shown in his "Wells as Historian" how numerous they are—is his statement that a handful of the Greeks did all these wonderful things, and that the vast majority were indifferent or hostile. He forgets that Athens was a perfect democracy. Not a dollar could be used

from the treasury, not a building designed or raised, without the consent of the twenty thousand male citizens and voters. Moreover, the theater (which was also, in later years, the parliament house) seated thirty thousand spectators, to witness the superb tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, as well as the comedies of Aristophanes and Menander.

Narrow-minded men the Athenians certainly were on the religious side—religion is always the great retarding influence—but even here they rarely enforced their laws. Professor Bury has lately shown ("R. P. A. Annual," 1925) that the condemnation to death of Socrates had a political element. They were, at all events, bigoted; but we have every reason to believe that they were proud of their unique city and its unique achievements.

MORALS OF THE ATHENIANS

We grant you all this greatness in the field of intellect, the preacher says, but what was the spirituality, the moral level, of the Athenians?

That precious spirituality! I wish to talk quietly and sensibly with my religious neighbor, and I ask him why he lays so much stress on spirituality and virtue. He gasps in astonishment and speechlessness. The truth is that he is repeating a shibboleth. He has been accustomed to hearing these things. But I press for reasons, and he attempts to give them. Why, he says, without a high moral and spiritual level society itself degenerates, the intellect is paralyzed, the energy is sapped, the great deeds of the strong early race. . . . He breaks down when he perceives my smile. Precisely these Athenians, whom he accuses of lack of spirituality and morality, maintained a splendid social order and gave the world such brilliant intellectual achievements that no single nation, even twenty times as large, will ever rival them. The whole Athenian state, remember, was no bigger than Minneapolis, and not one-tenth as wealthy; and this little corrupt state, as you call it, produced "the most refined, brilliant civilization the world has yet seen." Those, we shall see, are the words of a clergyman.

Let us have done with this kind of bunk. But surely, my friend says, it is admitted by all the authorities that the Athenians were very brilliant in art and intellect and very loose in morals. If that were true—though my experience is that the man who speaks glibly about "all the authorities" could not even name three of them—it would follow that immorality is quite consistent with brilliant art and intellect, if it does not actually promote them.

But it is *not* true; and to disprove it, I will take at once a high authority who is also a Protestant clergyman, Professor Mahaffy. Indeed, in the work from which I am going to quote, "Social Life in Greece," an express study of moral and social life

by a master of Greek literature, and therefore, even on the academic side, the most reliable book we could choose, the conflict of Christian (or clerical) sentiment and scholarly love of facts (and even of the Greeks themselves) is somewhat amusing. Professor Mahaffy is bound to hold that Christianity is superior to paganism; but he is singularly unfortunate in vindicating his belief.

In particular he forgets that, in comparing the Greeks of more than two thousand years ago with modern times, he is *not* comparing paganism and Christianity. Our generation is, as I have shown, not Christian; and, being two thousand years later than the Greeks, it *ought* to be a little wiser in its social life. But let us keep in mind that, if we want to compare Greek morals with Christian, we must not take the twentieth century or the end of the nineteenth. We must take ages when practically everybody was a Christian; and we may see in another chapter how sordid their morals were.

Let us run through this most authoritative work of Professor Mahaffy, as it naturally refers to morals every few pages; and, since it covers the whole of social life, it will give us the verdict of a Christian scholar on the charges which less scholarly clergymen bring against the Greeks.

Right at the start, in the introduction, Professor Mahaffy betrays the embarrassment which his professional, and no doubt personal, zeal for his religion causes. "The refinement of Greek manners culminated in the gentle Menander," he says (p. 6). Menander was the second greatest comedian of Athens, though few but scholars ever heard of him. We have only fragments of his comedies. On the other hand, we have a large number of complete works of the other great Greek comedian, Aristophanes, and religious writers are fond of quoting the scurrilities of some of those comedies as "typical" of Athenian sentiment. Menander, as we see from the fragments, was the opposite of scurrilous. "The gentle Menander," is the professor's customary way of naming him. He quotes these "almost Christian" words from one of the fragments: "Prefer to be injured rather than to injure, for (in so doing) you will blame others, and you will escape censure." He tells us that Menander's comedies reflected a state of moral and domestic sentiment very like our own, and they were full of moral scenes and happy endings. But, since only scholars read these things, we take our opinion of the Athenian stage from Aristophanes.

Strange, isn't it, that those pious and industrious monks of the Middle Ages, who "preserved for us all that is best in classical literature"—you know the Catholic boast—should have so carefully preserved the "scurrilous" plays of Aristophanes and so completely ignored the "almost Christian" comedies of Menander!

However, Professor Mahaffy at once tells us that there were

"cruelties and barbarities" in Greek life. These, he says, were "violently in conflict with the humanity of a Socrates, a Euripides, or a Plato"; in other words, the world had not to wait for Christ to correct them and they *were* corrected in Greece. But the amusing thing is that Professor Mahaffy sees here an opportunity to say a word for his religion. These blemishes he thinks, "would exist now among us, but for two great differences in our society—one of them the direct result of Christianity. They are the invention of printing and the abolition of slavery." I will say only that Christianity had no more to do with the abolition of slavery than it had with the invention of printing!

And the Christian scholar immediately undoes even the little he has claimed. He wonders at "the smallness of the advance in public morality which has been attained." He confesses that it is precisely in the field of morals that "we are led to wonder most at the superiority of Greek genius, which, in spite of an immoral and worthless theology, worked out in its higher manifestations a morality approaching in many points the best type of modern Christianity." This "modern Christianity" is good! He means Christianity purified by modern humanitarianism. And he ends his introduction thus: "Socrates and Plato are far superior to the Jewish moralist [who is supposed to have been inspired], they are far superior to the average Christian moralist; it is only in the matchless teaching of Christ himself that we find them surpassed."

It may seem ungenerous, after this hard stroke at the Old Testament, to cavil with the praise of the New: but there is not a point in the "matchless" teaching of Christ that cannot be matched in the pagan moralists.

We will, however, return to the philosophers presently. In his survey of Greek literature generally, in so far as it reflects Greek life (which we have no other means of knowing), Professor Mahaffy finds no evidence whatever of the supposed low morals of the Greeks. He quotes a number of the early poets and concludes: "In all these quotations we see a moral attitude which is about the same as that of average society in our day," (p. 106). This refers to a time long before Socrates and Plato; and the Athenians grew better, not worse.

Next Professor Mahaffy analyzes the great early tragedian, Aeschylus, and this is his verdict: "Let me add that no modern theology has taught higher and purer moral notions than those of Aeschylus and his school, developed afterwards by Socrates and Plato, but first attained by the genius of Aeschylus," (p. 154).

Not feeble praise for an age preceding the preaching of Christ by five whole centuries, and before the best "prophecies" and psalms of the Old Testament were written! (And pray remember all the time that it is a devout clergyman I am quoting.) Aeschy-

lus, he says, "shows the indelible nature of sin, and how it recoils upon the third and fourth generation, thus anticipating one of the most marked features in Christian theology." I do not admire Aeschylus for that; but perhaps the reader does. And finally the Christian professor drives the lesson home in these decisive words: "The agreement of Sophocles (in his "Oedipus") shows that these deep moral ideas were no individual feature in Aeschylus, and that there must have been a sober earnestness at Athens very far apart from the ribaldry of Aristophanes. Such immorality as that of the modern French stage was never tolerated among the Greeks, in spite of all their license" (p. 155).

At the risk, again, of seeming ungenerous, I must make two comments. One is that the "license" here referred to is not proved anywhere in the book, and it is at variance with every page of the book. The second is that "the modern French stage" is not quite as bad as the Paris stage used to be when France was Catholic; and that I have seen in Catholic Mexico, Spain, Italy and Greece whatever I have seen in secular Paris.

The third great tragedian, Euripides, is put almost on an even higher level:

> These [his heroines] are the women who have so raised the ideal of the sex that, in looking upon them, the world has passed from neglect to courtesy, from courtesy to veneration; these are they who, across many centuries, first of frivolity and sensuality, then [in the Christian Middle Ages], of rudeness and barbarism, join hands with the ideals of our religion and our chivalry, the martyred saints, the chaste and holy virgins of romance — nay more, with the true wives, the devoted mothers of our own day (p. 204).

Upon which, again, I will comment only that, as we shall see, most of the stories of our "martyred saints" and "chaste and holy virgins" are forgeries.

These were the three greatest dramatists of Greece. These were the tragedies which for centuries, twenty or thirty thousand Athenians used to witness, sitting for many hours on stone seats, in the theater on the flank of the Acropolis. The theater, remember, more fully reflects the sentiments of the audience than sermons do.

Next to these was "the gentle Menander," full of virtue which was truer to life because it was more homely. Next—now we get to the really dark spot—was the great comedian Aristophanes.

Aristophanes was unquestionably "licentious"; so the worthy monks have preserved all his works for us. His "Lysistrata" is a supremely funny and daring picture of a venereal strike on the part of the women of Greece. Prostitutes walk on his stage, and talk freely. Sex jokes are as common as in a French vaudeville—or in a high-class Chicago theater.

Well, Professor Mahaffy emphatically denies that we can judge the morals of Athens by the comedian. Is it likely, he asks, that

such pictures are characteristic of "the most refined and brilliant civilization the world has yet seen"? That is a shrewd blow at the preacher in the nations which "lay in darkness and the shadow of death." Incidentally, it hits Mr. Wells pretty hard. The simple explanation, Professor Mahaffy says, is that Aristophanes neither had a low opinion of woman nor wished to indict the women of his time, but he had in mind merely "the remnant of some old religious customs." Religion again!

And later comes an even shrewder blow at Mr. Wells' division of Athens into a score of refined people and a brutal mass:

> Nor do I find any trace of that severance of amusements which is one of the saddest features of modern life, where refined art and high excellence are only exhibited under such restrictions [especially pecuniary] as to exclude the masses, which are *now* so brutalized that they require a separate literature as well as a separate art, if art it can be called, to amuse them in their rapidly increasing leisure. We hear of no Liberties, or Seven Dials [the old thieves' quarter in London], at Athens. We hear of no hells, or low music halls, or low dancing saloons. Even such vice as existed was chiefly refined and gentlemanly (p. 255).

No wonder the professor has to strain matters to show that his religion has made the world better! If this be true—and it is the outcome of a study by a first-class authority of the whole of Greek literature—even our world is morally inferior to the Greek: the medieval world was unspeakably inferior.

In short, says Professor Mahaffy, "We have before us in Plato's Dialogues, and in the numerous fragments of the Middle and the New Comedy [plays too virtuous for the monks to copy], a life not inferior to the best society of our own day" (p. 261). We find the early barbarities ending in a humane penal system which casts a blush upon "the most cultivated and humane European nation in the nineteenth century" (p. 263). Of Plato's account of the death of Socrates it is said: "There is, I think, in all Greek literature no scene which ought to make us more ashamed of our boasted Christian culture" (p. 265).

But, you ask, if you have read any of these cheap and ignorant flings at the Athenians, has the learned professor forgotten that minx Aspasia, and the naughty *hetairai*, and Alcibiades, and the immoralities of the gods themselves?

Not in the least. Aspasia, the friend of Pericles, is, Mahaffy says, merely lampooned by "the scurrilous buffoonery" of the comedians. "There is no absolute proof of her want of dignity and morality" (p. 214). She was a virtuous lady to whose house even Socrates and Xenophon, the great moralists, went "for the purpose of serious mental improvement." And there is no evidence that there were *hetairai* at Athens (though there were at Corinth), and no evidence that the *hetairai* were immoral. And as to the immorality of some of the legends about the gods, the clerical

professor reminds us that several chapters of the Bible are "unsuited to modern perusal" and that "manifest immoralities are read" out of it. The portrait of Alcibiades in Plutarch, in fine, is said to be "hardly of any use as a specimen of manners, for we are told that he was in every way exceptional" (p. 221). And, to conclude the list, the Greek love of boys was perfectly innocent, as Jowett had proved long before, and Edward Carpenter has proved again in his beautiful "Iolaus."

I have almost let Professor Mahaffy write this chapter for me, for I could not quote a more acceptable authority. In spite of all his allusions to Christ, it is clear that the Greeks were not morally inferior to us, and were far superior to Europe when it was entirely Christian. I know modern Athens well; and I know that, though it is intensely Christian, there is in it quite as much looseness, and incomparably more *unnatural* vice, than there was in ancient Athens.

In sum, the Greeks, like the Babylonians and Egyptians, were much the same as ourselves. They had the same ideals: they seem to have observed them in the same proportion. The great mass of the Greek women and girls were guarded in an almost oriental seclusion, and they could hardly philander much, if they were so disposed. In precise consequence of this there were prostitutes. Gay Corinth had a great number of them; and the fast young man of Athens went there as naturally as the young man of Chicago seeks the prostitution quarter today. Human nature was just the same, human ideals were just the same, then as now; and therefore I have attempted no sort of detailed picture of the life of a Greek. It differed from ours only in details which do not concern this book.

But let me, while showing that even sexually the Greeks were no freer than the Christians, point out once more that sex is not the whole, or the main part, of morals. Justice, honor, kindliness, truthfulness, generosity, temperance—these are the great laws; and I know no informed writer who thinks the Greeks were less familiar with them than we are.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION

The gods of the Greek were quite indifferent to moral laws. They lied, cheated, quarreled—and loved. The amours of the great god Zeus were known to every little girl in Greece. If she were pretty, she must almost have half expected any night a visit from Zeus in the form of a bull, a swan, a shower of gold, or what not. Greek literature abounded in stories of human virgins impregnated miraculously by Zeus and giving birth to gods or demigods.

If, therefore, the popular religion included only gods who were very far from "holy," where was the sanction of morals, and

what was the real influence of religion? We must devote a very short section to the Greek religion.

The old gods of Greece, father Zeus and his wife and daughter, Hephaestos and Aphrodite and all the rest, were brought down from the northeast into the sunny peninsula by the early barbaric Greeks. They were nature-gods, married and adjusted to each other and given new attributes in the course of time. The Greeks had no sacred books about them in the same sense as the Hebrews. It is from the early poets, Homer and Hesiod and others, that we learn the stories.

And a critical study of the Greek writers in different ages shows that, since there was no "inspired" record (though Plato works out a theory of inspiration of the poets just like the Christian theory) to limit a man's imagination, the gods were quite differently conceived by different individuals and at different times.

To the austere tragedians Zeus was the moral ruler of the world; and, as we saw, none ever took moral principles more seriously than they did. To lighter poets the amours of the gods were good poetic material. In fact, Professor Mahaffy shows that much, if not all, of the moral light-heartedness that was attributed to the gods was not original in Greek religion. It was the poets or bards at the courts of the petty and pleasure-loving early kings who embroidered the legends with all sorts of amorous adventures.

In any case, these stories of the immorality of the gods had no concern with the morals of mortals. A parallel case must at once occur to the mind of any Christian reader. He is told that he must not be vindictive. He must suffer injury or insult without retaliating. But God does nothing of the kind. He inflicts an appalling punishment on those who insult his majesty. It is a platitude that God's ways are not the ways of mortals.

So the Greek maid would not for a moment receive a lover because of the example of Zeus. Any person of common sense will assume that Greek maids admitted lovers in about the same proportion as they have done since, and had done since civilization began. Professor Mahaffy, the clergyman, is more zealous for Greek sex-morals than I should be. I have no doubt that Aspasia loved Pericles. She was a Milesian, not an Athenian, and could not wed an Athenian. I assume that she dispensed with the ceremony; and I assume that the *hetairai*, while unquestionably more like the Japanese *geishas* than English or American prostitutes— that is to say, they were women who earned their living by entertaining in a general way—did admit lovers to a great extent.

The plain fact is that the official religion as such was not concerned with morals in Greece. It did not even teach any particular theology about the gods. It taught nothing whatever about a life after death. The Greek idea, generally, was much the same as the

Babylonian. There was some sort of life beyond, but it was useless to try to penetrate the mists. The dead "slept" and there was an end of it. The word "cemetery" makes the flesh of a Christian creep, in spite of his certain hope of resurrection. But it is a beautiful Greek word. It means the same as "dormitory"; it is the "sleeping place." Glorious as life was in Athens, no people ever met death and talked about death with such sane and serene recognition of it as a natural fact.

Unlike the Babylonian, on the other hand, the Greek had no belief in legions of devils whom the gods would permit to torment him if he sinned. His sunny nature, the brightening of his whole outlook when he came down from the northeast into his lovely home by the sparkling Mediterranean, gave his religious development a special character. He brought with him the belief in innumerable spirits as well as the great gods. Originally these would be very largely malicious or evil spirits, as we have seen amongst all nations. Babylonians, Egyptians, Chinese, and others kept the evil spirits as legions of devils in their religion; but the Greek almost allowed them to pass out of existence. Just as his gods became genial and pleasure-loving like himself, so his minor spirits were mainly nymphs, dryads, satyrs, and so on: sportive and generally fair creatures living in the woods and waters.

In passing let me say a word about this "sunny nature" of the Greek. It is more than a phrase, and it did color his religion. But some misunderstand it and lightly assume that it must have meant great freedom of morals.

On the contrary, Greece produced the most austere of moralists: the tragedians of our last section and the moral philosophers of the next. And every dramatist or teacher implies a large audience of like-minded people. But writers who confuse lightness and looseness of mind are very superficial. In the first place, a sunny nature might be disposed to transgress the sex part of morals, the authenticity of much of which has always been, and is, disputed, but it would be just as naturally disposed *in favor* of the more substantial part of the moral or social code: the law of kindliness, generosity, honor, just and friendly relations with one's fellows.

In the second place, however, one must remember that the Greeks were also the first nation in the world to develop sport in the modern sense. Our modern stadia, our Olympic games, the very words *gymnastics* and *athletics,* are Greek. The Greek's love of beauty was nowhere more conspicuous than in his love of a clean and comely human body. Even the maidens, although they were carefully guarded in the home, had their sports; and they had in the glorious open air endless graceful dances which had not at all the same tendency as the "buckle-polishing" of modern Europe and America.

For the youths there was as fine and healthy a system of

athletics and gymnastics as exists anywhere in the world. Stadia were as important as theaters. Both were in the open air; and both might be said to be physically and intellectually healthful. Olympia, which gave the name to the Olympic games, was a special recreation city, up country, for all the Greeks: a cluster of beautiful marble buildings, with exquisite sculpture, to which crowds streamed for the games every four years. Our modern Olympic games are degenerate imitations of these; for the Greeks had intellectual, poetic, and musical contests, in superb halls, as well as races and wrestling.

The result was the creation of a magnificent type of young manhood and womanhood. It was partly on this account that there was in Greece a remarkable development of love of boys and youths. Preachers have, apparently, not the least idea of the appalling prevalence of pederasty in southern Europe today. I have met one who naïvely believed that unnatural vice died out with paganism! They are apt to think that the ancient Greek's love of boys was evil. No doubt there were cases; but one authority after another has shown that the Greek love of youths was healthy. It is enough that the great moralist Plato gives us in his "Symposium" a glowing and beautiful eulogy of the practice. Had there been in his time any considerable abuse of the passion Plato would never have written that page. Like other moralists, he thought the love of woman merely sensual, and the love of youth for youth "virtuous."

The Greek had a sane and broad ideal of life to which the world is only now returning: beautiful body, beautiful mind, beautiful character—or, equal cultivation of body, mind, and will. The wonderful statues left us by the great Greek sculptors, chiefly Phidias and Praxiteles, which are from living models, show us the result. This manliness was the real expression of the sunny nature of the Greek.

In all this mortals differed fundamentally from the gods, and there was nothing in Greek religion in the least analogous to modern religion. There was no exhortation to "imitate" the gods. They were in no sense models. Zeus was, as I said, often conceived as the supreme guardian of justice, but the general Greek idea was that certain other high and mysterious beings which they called "fate" or "the fates" pursued the criminal and avenged law. Zeus was just "Father Zeus." His full name really means (like Jupiter) "the father in heaven" or in the sky. He sent the rain and the sunshine upon just and unjust alike; but they came in fairly steady and happy proportions in Greece, and so no one worried about Zeus.

The official religion, in other words, never troubled about ethics. Sacrifices, ceremonies, and processions—artistic developments of ancient practices—were all that it enjoined. If you seduced

a man's wife or daughter, it was not the business of Zeus. It was the business of the husband or father, and he paid very close attention to it: much closer than we do. It was the same with justice. It was a social matter, a secular concern. After the contents of the last section you will realize that Greece is really, like China and Japan, a splendid proof of the complete superfluousness of religion in regard to character.

The normal development of this religion would be that the educated would tolerate it, perhaps practice it in public and smile at it in private, as long as the mass of the people remained sufficiently ignorant to believe in it. Remember that there was no code of doctrine, no "sacred record," in Greece. It is, in a sense, quite wrong to say that there were immoralities in Greek religion. The stories of the amours of Zeus were in no sense dogmas. No man need believe them, and the more serious probably did not. You were still a good Greek if you thought Zeus merely the spirit of the universe and the other gods and goddesses aspects of the same principle. We shall see in the next section that educated Greeks so believed, and that the final stage, Atheism, set in.

But quite early this normal development was complicated by certain secret cults known as "mysteries," which the modern will best understand by thinking of the secret ceremonies of the Freemasons. The "Eleusinian Mysteries," the best known, consisted, in historic times, of a nine days' celebration at Eleusis. Every free-born Athenian had to be initiated, and had to take an oath never, under pain of death, to reveal what he or she saw. We know, however, quite well what they saw; but this is no place to describe the long ceremonies.

Just as the secret gatherings of the early Christians were said to be for the purpose of orgies—and as late as the fourth century St. Ambrose tells us that they sometimes were—so the Greek "mysteries" were said by early Christians to cover orgies of indecency. It is now well known that, on the contrary, they concentrated the most austere and pious elements of the Greek nature. There is reason to think that originally the mysteries were a secret cult (possibly with sexual rites, I should say) of the old fertility-goddess Demeter or Ceres. But the emptiness of the official religion for certain types of mind caused them to turn to these mysteries.

There are in all ages people who are not happy unless they have an occasional or frequent opportunity to groan over their sins. Moreover, the official religion not only gave no sure and certain hope of a resurrection, but it never bothered about a future life. The type of mind I have referred to cannot possibly wait to see what happens after death, but must retire underground periodically to try to forecast its future. These elements found their expression in the "mysteries," which to a very large number of the Greeks meant what the Holy Week services mean to the Cath-

olic or a revival meeting means to the American Protestant. It must not for a moment be supposed that all the Greeks took their religion gaily. A large number bemoaned their sins, and were baptized, at the "mysteries" in the most exemplary and devastating fashion.

The cult of Dionysus (or Bacchus) was another new cult which attracted the deeper religious fervor. He was the "spirit of the vine." In his "mysteries" there was probably a representation of the birth of the baby-god Dionysus like that of Horus in Egypt or of Christ in Catholic churches today.

The fact is that hardly one of the preachers who talk so glibly about the pagan Greeks and their immoral Zeus has the least idea of the immense amount of deep "spiritual" life, akin to the deeper Christian life, that there was in ancient Greece. About the middle of the sixth century, long before the Golden Age of Pericles, a religious revival passed all over the country, and had permanent results in the cults I have mentioned. It had also an effect on philosophy, which had then begun, and we must see how this in turn leads in Greece to the inevitable skepticism and to a creation of systems of ethics without religion.

RISE OF PHILOSOPHY AND SKEPTICISM

Greek philosophy is as brilliant as every other creation of the Greek intellect. The line of thinkers which that little nation produced in the course of three centuries has no parallel in the history of thought, and every conceivable variety or cast of speculation made its appearance.

The history of Greek thought is the procedure which the mind of the race is now following. "In all that we do today," says one of the best Greek scholars of Britain, G. Lowes Dickinson, "we join hands with the Greeks across the abyss of the Middle Ages." And our clerical friend Professor Mahaffy has a fine page (p. 2) which may be summarized in the same sentence. He says that Egyptian moralists and Hebrew prophets—he seems to love a sly hit at Bible-worshippers—would, even if they were taught our language, quite fail to understand our ideas; but any intelligent Greek would "at once find his way." We are discussing just what he was discussing in the Agora twenty-three hundred years ago. We are taking up the development of human culture where it dropped from his hands more than two millennia ago.

Could there be a more eloquent eulogium of the Greek, or a more deadly indictment of the Christian faith which has dominated the world during the intervening two thousand years?

But the course of Greek thought did not run smoothly. It was distorted by religion. It turned away from science to "spiritual truths"; and it has shown for all time how futile and mischievous is that high-sounding appeal to us to turn from science to spiritual

truths. In this short section I can do no more than emphasize that point and show how eventually Greek thought reached its inevitable term in Skepticism.

I have already said how Greek civilization first reached a high development in the Mediterranean fringe of Asia Minor or on the islands off the coast, and how this points to a mingling with the refugees from Crete. The early Greek philosophers nearly all belong to this region. In fact, we may say that philosophy was born of the marriage of ancient Cretan culture and the fresh, strong manhood of the newly arrived Greeks. But the most essential condition to bear in mind is the liberty the Greeks enjoyed in Asia Minor. They were in a colonial world; they were free to speculate.

This Greek fringe on the coast of Asia Minor was known as Ionia, and the first school of thinkers is known as the Ionic school. From the start it was more scientific than metaphysical. Its leaders studied nature, and man as a part of nature. They sought the "first principles" of things, not in abstract metaphysical formulae, and not at all in religion, but in physical realities. Thales, the "father of philosophy," thought that water was the original element out of which all other things came. It was not a bad beginning, but just then the religious revival of which I have spoken took place, and the next Greek thinker said that "the infinite"—not God, but something hopelessly indefinite—was the first principle. The third, Anaximenes, took air—an infinite quantity of air—as the starting point. The fourth, Xenophanes, said that the primordial element was earth. The fifth chose fire.

We must remember that this was the birth of speculation about nature—apart from the windy metaphysic of the Hindus—and guesses were bound to be crude. But thought was really finding its way onward. On the one hand, the world was being interpreted on natural principles, without the absurdities of the Babylonian (and Hebrew) creation. Xenophanes, the fourth thinker I mentioned, emphatically called attention to the repulsiveness of the legends about gods, and he seems pretty plainly to have been very skeptical. The next thinker, Heraclitus, expressly denied that the world was created by gods, and said that it was an eternally changing substance. The next thinker in the line, Empedocles (of the Greek colony in Sicily), whose mind was a strange blend of mysticism and science, maintained that there was only one God, "a sacred and unutterable mind"; in other words, he, in the fifth century B. C., conceived God as the most advanced Modernists do today.

And these speculations about the universe, besides showing men how to think without gods, led naturally to a belief in evolution. If there was no "in the beginning," as Babylonians and Hebrews said, if the universe was eternal, and there was one

primordial element of all things, then there has been an eternal evolution of this element into the contents of the universe today. Every one of these early Greek thinkers believed that; and the doctrine was further developed by two of the boldest of them all, Leucippus and Democritus, whom I would call the real fathers of science.

About the middle of the fifth century Leucippus, another Ionian Greek, hit upon the idea that matter must be composed of "atoms." The universe consisted of an infinite number of atoms, of different shapes and sizes, which have, without any directing mind, gradually come together in the bodies we see today. Democritus developed this idea with real scientific genius. All the contents of the universe, including man, were the result of an eternal, unguided, quite purposeless tossing and mingling of the atoms. Democritus, moreover, while completely rejecting all religion, worked out an elevated system of humanitarian morals. A. W. Benn, in his small "History of Ancient Philosophy" (which may be recommended to those who wish to go a little further) quotes several ethical maxims of the materialist Democritus which fully match the "matchless" ethic of Christ. They are in fact, much too moral and austere for me.

It need hardly be said that the working out in detail of such an evolutionary theory, at a time when science was nearly all guess work and there was little or no observation, led to much crudeness and absurdity. But three very great principles had been fixed: the eternity of the world and its independence of gods, the existence of atoms, and the fact of evolution. At the same time these early thinkers observed much in astronomy, and they were (for the time) good mathematicians. Many of them visited Egypt, and learned whatever the priests of Egypt could tell them. They obtained some idea of the immense size of the sun and of the vastness of the universe; and Pythagoras actually declared, for the first time in the history of thought, that the earth revolved round the sun.

Here certainly was a most promising foundation for science; but, as I said, religion hampered the development and diverted thought to other channels. Anaxagoras took the speculations of the physicists to Athens; and the democracy made him fly for his life for uttering such impieties, although he judiciously blended his science with some theological mysticism.

Another train of thought, in Greece itself, had in the meantime led to Skepticism. There arose a school of Sophists who took pleasure in contending that the mind could come to no valid conclusions whatever. The first of them, Protagoras, talked about the gods even less respectfully than Confucius. "I cannot say whether they exist or not," he said. "Life is too short for such difficult investigations." Both this man and Anaxagoras were great friends

of Pericles, and it is clear that these skeptical ideas pervaded the whole group of artists and thinkers of the Golden Age. But—partly in political opposition to the aristocratic party, to which they belonged—the democracy raged against them, and Protagoras in turn had to hurry from the country.

It was in these circumstances that Socrates, the leader of a very different line of Greek thinkers, came upon the scene at Athens, in the second half of the fifth century B. C. He was put to death in 399 B. C. I do not mean that this great thinker and moralist, whom H. G. Wells so strangely belittles, was at all intimidated by the popular clamor against blasphemy. He was a man of the highest and most independent character, and he met death on the grotesque and utterly false charge of having corrupted the young men of Athens, with a smile on his lips.

But he naturally did not foresee any development of importance to human welfare in these speculations about the ultimate principles of things. No genius in the world could have anticipated what science would one day mean to the race. What did it seem to matter whether the ultimate principle was air or water or fire? Or whether there were atoms? What did matter was that human conduct should be effectively guided and that men should understand the real nature of justice and "the good." So Socrates turned the brilliant race aside from the foundations of science which had been laid, and he provided instead the bases of philosophy and ethics. Pythagoras, the Greek who had first realized that the earth traveled round the sun, yet a strange mystic, had preceded him. Philosophy was to be profoundly religious. Religion was to become a philosophy.

We have no works written by Socrates. His ideas are known only from his pupils, Plato (especially) and Xenophon; and very probably Plato has given them a little color from his own more mystical mind. But I need not here give any description of the ideas of Plato. Like Socrates, he believed in one God, an eternal spiritual being such as Modernists now offer us; he believed intensely in the immortality of the soul, and provided proofs of it which we still read for the beauty of the language and smile at for the feebleness of the argument; and he was a most austere moralist, belittling matter and the flesh, and tracing everything good and true and beautiful in the world to "spirit."

In other words, Plato set a mischievous fashion which has not yet died out. Half the verbiage that befogs the minds of people today is due to this glorification of "spirit" and depreciation of "mere matter"; and it begs the whole question whether the mind is or is not material. The only profit of Plato to us is that he and these other Greek thinkers show that the purest Monotheism could be reached without the faintest gleam of revelation, and that they anticipated the entire ethic of Christ centuries before he was born.

In fact, they prove in another way a truth which I have previously established: that a man's philosophy of life, whether materialist or spiritualist, religious or non-religious, makes no difference to his moral ideal. The materialist Democritus had as lofty sentiments as the mystic Pythagoras or the spiritual Plato. The skeptical Alcidamas, a Sophist and Agnostic, was the first man to denounce slavery; hundreds of years before anybody discovered that it was condemned by Christian principles. The Agnostic Epicurus had as sane and sober a conception of character as the Theistic Aristotle. Morality is a human matter. It has its roots in human experience, not in speculation.

I have said the "Theistic Aristotle," but that great thinker was far less mystic than Plato. His god, or Supreme Mind, was unconscious of sublunary matters, and therefore not a universal providence or a creator. Nor did he believe in personal immortality. His system of thought is one of the most learned and original ever given to the world. He summarized all the science of his time, and he made a science of ethics and politics. Unfortunately, he was also a metaphysician. He thought that besides our knowledge of nature *(ta physica)* it was possible to get a knowledge of things beyond the physical *(ta meta ta physica,* or metaphysics), and these were more important and more worthy of the mind. In that sense Aristotle, though for his time a great scientific man, joined Plato in leading human thought astray.

What I am chiefly concerned with here is that all these thinkers were high moral idealists. It is worth while to stress this, as to the average Christian it must seem very mysterious that "wicked pagan Greece" should produce a line of lofty moralists to which —in the same space of time—there is no parallel in the history of thought. Athens was not so much the city of vice as the greatest morality-making center the world has ever known.

This culminated in the Stoic School. The philosophers used to gather groups about them in their gardens or in public places, and one of them, Zeno, chose the Painted Colonnade (Stoa Poikile) of which I spoke in the first section. Hence the "Stoic" philosophy.

It was not a religion, as it is so often called. Zeno and the Stoics spoke of "God," but he was a material entity, and he was not at all the author and vindicator of the moral law. The law was an eternal part of nature, and a man was urged to live in harmony with nature. This may seem to some a poor basis; but, as we shall see presently, this philosophy inspired in the Roman world the greatest humanitarian movement ever known until modern times. It kept educated Romans at a high level of character, and it produced Christ-like austere moralists such as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Let me repeat—let me emphasize—this most austere and (in its more sober Roman form) most effective of

moral systems was a *dogmatic Materialism!* The Stoics ridiculed the very ideas of spirit and free will: which we are asked to regard as the indispensable bases of any moral conduct.

Passing over schools of Pantheists, Cynics, and Sophists (or all-round Skeptics), Greek philosophy ended in the system of Epicurus. I hold that he was the sanest of all. He built upon science, gathering together all that the early scientists had said about the universe. He spoke of "gods" as beings somewhere out in the abysses of space with whom a sensible man need not concern himself. It seems to me that, like Confucius, he was really an Agnostic. In any case, his ethics, one of the sanest systems given to the world, had nothing whatever to do with religion. Moral law was social law. Epicurus was—contrary to the libelous, ridiculous idea of his philosophy which Christian writers put into circulation—one of the most abstemious of men. "Tranquillity," the quiet life, was his idea. If he was wrong at all, it was in being too ascetic.

But Athens was now in full decay. The work of Greece was done: nobly and brilliantly done. The republic, enfeebled by a long civil war, had fallen. The monarchy of the Macedonians overshadowed it. The philosophy of Epicurus reflects the time: the wish for a quiet, passionless life. Those were the last days of autumn for the great race. Its spirit was sinking. In vain did Epicurus strive to bring men back to the foundations of science. They had no energy to build. The work of civilization passed on to Rome.

THE SPLENDOR THAT WAS ROME

Since I have already said that the ethical code of ancient Rome was mainly the Stoic philosophy of the Greeks, and since the official religion closely resembled the Greeks and did not attempt to control conduct, I need not linger so long over the sister-civilization. But ancient Rome is little understood except by scholars, and there is no other nation of antiquity except the Babylonian that is so often selected by preachers as an awful example of depravity before Christ, or apart from Christianity. Rome was the second Babylon, they say. Well, we saw what Babylon really was: and the reader will now be almost as completely disillusioned in regard to Rome.

Let me first describe its people in a general way, for many of the misunderstandings about Rome arise from certain broad ideas which are almost entirely false. Ancient Rome has suffered in a peculiar way in modern literature. Supplementing the preachers, who never tire of speaking of its vices (of which they know nothing), certain advanced social writers have calumniated Rome because to them it was an awful example of capitalism. They confirm the very common impression that the population of ancient

Rome consisted of a few very wealthy and very unscrupulous men and a vast army of exploited and vilely treated slaves.

Even H. G. Wells, who at least knows that there was a large body of free workers in Rome, has so wrong an idea of their condition that he actually wonders if they were happy! You shall learn their condition, and you will smile.

First as to the economic question. The wealth of the Roman capitalists or rich men is usually very much exaggerated. For more than half a century scholars have been interested in calculating the actual wealth, in modern currency, of these Roman millionaires; it is almost enough to say that the largest fortune amongst them that is definitely known to us is that of Crassus, who left less than ten million dollars. Several people die even in England every year with larger estates than that, while in America it would be deemed a moderate fortune. The chief authority of the preachers, when they trouble to seek an authority, is the Roman poet Juvenal: an early "Bolshevik," the kind of prophet to whom they do not pay the least attention in our own time. But we know positively that the richest man of Juvenal's day had not one million dollars a year, which I may, perhaps, capitalize as a total fortune of about fifteen million dollars. In short, any six wealthy patricians of ancient Rome could have been bought up by more than one capitalist of modern America; and there are men in America who could have bought up twenty of the richest patricians Rome ever had!

Next, it is quite a mistake to suppose that all the work in Greece and Rome was done by slaves. Slavery is one of the blots on the old civilizations; but we must remember that Greece and Rome were only a few centuries out of barbarism; while Christian nations had hordes of slaves not very long ago. To the Greeks and Romans it seemed that enslaving a man was a humane improvement upon the older practice of killing him when he was taken captive: whereas the Christian nations raided Africa for the express purpose of enslaving men. Finally, it is a sheer myth that the Christian Church abolished slavery, or made any protest whatever against it for many centuries; yet I have already quoted a Greek moralist, Alcidamas, condemning slavery in the fourth century B. C., and one Stoic moralist after another condemned it.

No one really knows what proportion the slaves bear to the general population in Greece and Rome. In Greece, the best authorities say, they were three to one—a recent Socialist writer makes them thirty to one!—and were humanely treated. In the Roman Empire they are generally estimated at ten to one at the time when incessant warfare brought millions of captives into the Empire. Professor Belock, however, who has made a special study of the matter in his work "Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt," warns us that all these figures are enormously exaggerated, and we will only deplore that the luxuries of the Romans, workers

(as we shall see in a moment) as well as patricians, were based upon the labor of millions of rural slaves who were, generally, badly treated. In the city of Rome they were not generally ill-used, and from the first century onward they had the protection of the law.

But it is of the free Romans—most of the slaves were foreigners —that we have to speak. In Rome, when its population reached one million, there were between three and four hundred thousand free workers; and they had a position of privilege and entertainment which no "modern body of workers remotely approaches."

To begin with, they had in the city itself a superb public home to which not even the richest city in the world today affords a parallel. In American cities—I remember Denver and Minneapolis, for instance—there is an admirable practice growing of having "civic centers": pretty open spaces in the center of the city, with gardens, handsome little buildings or colonnades, for the citizens to enjoy. The very best of these is but a feeble imitation of the marble heart of ancient Rome.

In Athens, we saw, the Agora, the old cattle-market, was the public square. It was lined with beautiful buildings and colonnades and adorned with statues; and on one side of it towered the Acropolis with its superb marble portico and exquisite temple. At Rome the civic center was the Forum (also the old cattle-market, or center of the primitive village of Rome). It was a very broad, oblong space, richly adorned with statues and lined with marble buildings from end to end.

The Romans had not the artistic genius of the Greeks, but when they incorporated Greece in their possessions, thousands of Greek artists and scholars flocked to wealthy Rome and educated it in the art of living. Temples, palaces, and public buildings, in the most beautiful marbles the world afforded, lined each side of the Forum. At one end stood the great Amphitheater or (as we call it) Colosseum; at the other rose the sacred hill, the Capitol, with a gold-roofed marble temple of Jupiter at the summit. And nearly every building had broad, cool colonnades to shelter the Roman workers from the sun. But this was not enough, and the Emperors built a new series of Fora—magnificent marble avenues and colonnades, of which we still find exquisite fragments—so that in the end the Romans had nearly a mile of these wonderful structures.

I calculate—I know old Rome well and have the deepest affection for it—that every Roman worker lived within ten minutes' walk of this beautiful center. The workers were housed in crowded tenement-blocks, four or five stories high, with very narrow streets. But in their glorious climate one lives in the open air most of the year, and there is in the whole world today no

civic center remotely approaching that which the Romans had to lounge and play in.

All very well, you say, but how much time had the Roman worker for lounging and playing? Was he not, though nominally a free artisan, really ground and exploited to create the wealth of the patricians in their palaces on the hills? Was there a Christian day of rest?

Here, I find, in lecturing on Rome, is the greatest surprise for the modern worker. The old Roman artisan worked far less than any worker of modern times. The British or American worker is employed on about two hundred and eighty days in the year. And this, remember, is what the *secular* civilization of modern times has done for him. A hundred years ago, when England was still Christian, a man worked three hundred and ten days out of the three hundred and sixty-five; and he worked fourteen to sixteen hours a day for six full days a week! Now, let us say, the modern spirit, not the Christian religion, has won for him an eight-hour day and about eighty days' rest. And the pagan worker, at the height of the Roman Empire, worked only about one hundred and seventy days a year and played the rest!

What his wage was in modern coinage it would be useless to try to determine. Prices were totally different. His rent was high; but apart from rent and his simple clothing (little more than a single robe or tunic) his expenses were few.

For this is the next great surprise. He received for nothing the most solid part of his food—corn (and at one time a little pork and oil)—and all his entertainments. Three times a week the workers lined up on the "bread steps," and received their corn. It was not a "dole." It was a right; and you begin to see how even the Roman worker lived on the labor of slaves. It was armies of badly treated slaves in Africa, Gaul, and Spain who produced his free food. It was slaves working in the galleys who brought it to Rome.

Most princely of all were the free entertainments of the Roman worker. Mr. Wells repeats the popular opinion when he says that the bloody games of the Amphitheater, where gladiators fought each other or wild beasts, were the great passion of the Roman people. The Colosseum, as we call it, was in its prime a magnificent marble-lined building seating ninety thousand spectators. On fifty or more days a year rich officials or emperors provided free shows there for the Romans, and they were gala days, with gorgeous processions, for the whole of Rome.

But this brutal display, against which the Stoics sternly protested, was not the great passion of the Romans. The Amphitheater, I said, seated ninety thousand spectators. But the Great Circus, the real pride and passion of the Romans, seated three hundred and eighty thousand; the entire body of the free workers of

Rome. The chariot races in the Circus, the keen discussions for weeks in advance, the same intense excitement as there is in connection with a baseball match today, the universal betting on the result —these were the great sports of the Romans. And no blood was shed, except by accident, in the Circus. The vast crowd—three times as large as the largest sports ground in the world can accommodate today—witnessed only chariot races, horse races, foot races, wrestling, juggling, and so on. Performers were brought from the ends of the world. The rival syndicates which ran the chariots spent enormous sums. A Roman charioteer earned as much as a good baseball player now does in America. And the Roman workers never paid one cent for admission.

Then there were the theaters, also free, where the finest mimes (actors without words) in the world performed and the classical tragedies of Plautus and Terence were given. Beyond these were the baths: vast marble-lined structures, including princely baths, libraries, gymnasia, and spacious colonnades. It was the only entertainment for which the Roman worker paid. When the bells rang the end of work at three in the afternoon, he could slip on his clean tunic and spend hours in these unique pleasure-houses. And the price was about half a cent! These palaces were gifts of the emperors to the workers. The Roman had sold his democratic birthright; but he got a tremendous price for it.

Another part of the price was an abundant supply of pure water to every floor of every tenement in Rome. As late as twenty years ago I found the water so generally contaminated in Italy that one had to avoid it. Two thousand years ago every worker had a supply of the purest water, brought by aqueducts from the hills many miles away; and the supply per person was as ample as in a modern city.

Free schooling was the next gift. One of Mr. Wells' most elementary errors is to say that Christianity, with all its faults, at least abolished slavery and gave the world schools. As I told him, no authority in the world on either subject would give him the least support. No great leader in the Christian Church denounced slavery for eight centuries after Christ. It was killed by economic factors: by the killing off of the wealthy Roman slave-owners when the Empire fell.

As to schools, there could not be a more erroneous statement. The Roman municipalities supplied free elementary instruction for the children of all workers. Anywhere you went, in a suburb of Rome or a small Italian town, you would see the teacher, in the porch of a house perhaps, teaching the children how to write on wax-faced tablets. Practically every Roman worker could read and write by the year 380 A. D., when Christianity began to have real power. By 480 nearly every school in the Empire was destroyed. By 580, and until 1780 at least, from ninety to ninety-

five percent of the people of Europe were illiterate and densely ignorant. That is the undisputed historical record of Christianity as regards education.

The Roman Empire provided higher as well as elementary education, and for the children of the workers this also was free. Even shorthand was as well known to the Romans as it is to us. Few people except scholars realize how the development of civilization was broken off when Greece and Rome fell, how it was suspended during the long domination of Roman Catholicism, and how we are today "joining hands with the Greeks (and Romans) across the abyss of the Middle Ages." High schools were provided in all important Roman centers; and there were a few still higher schools of the type we now call universities (for law, medicine, etc.). The son of the worker paid nothing.

Medical service, again, was free in the city of Rome for the poorer workers. Every temple of Aesculapius (the god of healing) gave free medical treatment, and the municipality of Rome paid a number of doctors to give free service to the poor. It is another vain and ignorant boast of the preacher that Christianity first founded hospitals and helped the sick poor. It is rubbish. Rome did what it could for them in the then state of medical science; and one has only to read what the "hospital" service was until modern times to measure what the world owes to the Church in this respect. It shattered Roman science and education, and it fought and hampered the men who, like Vesalius, tried in the Middle Ages to resume the development of medical science.

Finally, there is the boast that if the Church did not give the worker his modern Unions—even the boldest preacher hesitates to say that—at least it gave the world the famous medieval guilds, which inspired the Unions.

And this is as empty a boast as the claim to have given the world schools! I have proved elsewhere that the medieval guilds were, at their start, fiercely resisted and drastically condemned by the Church, precisely because they were pagan.

The truth is that both Greek and Roman workers had a perfect system of "Trade Unionism." All the tanners, builders, carpenters, etc., of any district were incorporated in what they called a "School" or "College" (in the original meaning of the word). They had a clubroom, frequent suppers, and funds for burial and mutual aid. Imperial decrees also plainly hint that they used their Unions for economic, if not political, purposes. It is now actually suggested that Paul, the tent-maker, used his trade connection to travel over the Roman world and spread Christianity. At all events, we know from inscriptions that slaves were admitted on equal terms in many of these colleges, and women were sometimes enrolled as members. The women of Rome were well on the

way to winning, two thousand years ago, the rights they had to fight for in our own time.

MORALS IN ANCIENT ROME

"Yes, yes," says my clerical reader impatiently, "I grant you all these material things, but what of the spiritual and moral condition of the Romans? It is in that priceless department of life that Christianity counts."

It is something that he grants these "material things." He was probably totally unaware of them before, and had repeated hundreds of times the shibboleth that Christianity had bettered the lot of woman and the worker. It did precisely the opposite. Moreover, the modern working man is not quite so sure as his fathers were about the inferiority of these "material things" in comparison with spirituality and virtue. However, I boldly take up the challenge about the morals of Rome.

And let me say that, as the reader will have gathered already, I am not here going to give Rationalist bunk instead of Christian bunk, as many do. I have said all through that the Christian emphasis on sex-rules is mischievous: it obscures the far greater importance of justice and honor, and it confuses real moral principle in sex-relations with ancient ideas that the world is discarding. I am not offering "the good life for its own sake" instead of for Christ's sake. The only moral standard I acknowledge is a solid social rule. I am not straining evidence to prove that pagans and Rationalists were all stained-glass angels. I assume, after reading all the available evidence, that in the cities of Babylon, Egypt, and Persia, in Athens and Rome, men lived pretty much as they do in Paris and London, New York and Chicago, today: and that is a bit more decently than they did in Christian times.

In the case of Rome it is especially difficult and dangerous to generalize. Now and again a very vulgar or half-mad emperor came to the throne, and during his reign there certainly were orgies. It is to the reigns of these men that the preacher turns for his material.

But he does not say—I doubt if any religious writer in the world has ever taken the trouble to count—that of the twenty-nine pagan Roman emperors twenty-one were admirable men of "good character," and eight only were "bad" (and several of those insane). Further, the twenty-one fine emperors ruled for two hundred and forty-five years, and the eight vicious monarchs for only seventy-five years, collectively. For one hundred and fifty years—nearly half the period—Rome had a series of Stoic emperors to which you will not find a parallel in the history of Christendom; and under them the world made a humanitarian progress that has no parallel except in our own "pagan" days. Let me add one fact to what I have said in the previous chapter. In the first century

(A. D.), under the pagan emperors, more than three hundred thousand orphans were reared in public institutions in Italy alone.

Now those are facts and figures which any man may easily verify. I will go further and give an amusing illustration of the way in which the vices of Rome even under the bad emperors are exaggerated.

Years ago I was invited to write a series of biographical sketches of the Roman empresses. I wrote the work ("The Empresses of Rome"), covering five hundred years of Roman history and myself examining the whole relevant Roman and Greek literature. I inserted all the scandalous things said about the empresses and emperors, only warning the reader when (as was most commonly the case) these things were unreliable gossip. I told, from Juvenal, how the Empress Messalina was said to have gone, night after night, to a common brothel to prostitute herself and return to the palace, in the words of the fiery poet, "tired, yet not sated, with men." I told how the young Emperor Elagabalus, a maniac from Syria (not a Roman), had the empire searched for a powerful male lover. I told everything; and the publisher was disappointed at the slenderness of the scandalous bits in the long prosy chronicle! To appease him and the public—he was not personally interested in such matters—I had then to write a similar series of sketches of the Byzantine empresses ("The Empresses of Constantinople"), who were all Christians, and the proportion of scandal was much greater!

These facts show the kind of nonsense that is written and preached about the "morals of Rome." It is very difficult for any conscientious student to generalize. There are no statistics whatever. Take the mass of the people. Were they more or less immoral than in a modern city? Candidly, after reading practically the whole of Latin literature, I don't know. There is no evidence. There were plenty of brothels *(lupanaria)* in Rome. You might go along a street and hear a curtain, stretched over the doorway, rattle impatiently on its rod. A courtesan behind it was attracting your attention.

What of that? I go along in the "black and tan" district of Chicago, and, under the glare of the arc lamps on the main road, there are half a dozen brothels, with a score of colored girls shamelessly laying hold of the coats of men on the pavement. I go along a quiet street in Mexico City, and at the open door, or before the door, of every house sits a prostitute, quietly "soliciting your custom." I enter a café in Madrid, under its Catholic dictators, and I count twelve obvious prostitutes at the tables speaking to me with their eyes. So the world over. We have not the least evidence that there was more of this in ancient Rome than there is in London. In fact, when London was more Christian than it now is, when seven-eighths went to church on Sunday instead of one-eighth (as

now), there were, the police reported (at the beginning of the nineteenth century) twenty-five thousand loose women to a million people. I doubt if there were nearly so many in Rome.

So I conclude that, on the whole, the mass of men were just about as immoral as they now are, and rather less than in the Middle Ages, when the clergy were nearly all immoral and some owned brothels. All the evidence is consistent with the assumption.

Talk about the vices of Rome always refers to the wealthy: to one-tenth, or less, of the population. And this talk is mainly taken from one writer, the poet Juvenal. As has been repeatedly shown, Juvenal is quite unreliable as to facts. Every Roman historian tells you that. To understand him, imagine the most fiery and most rhetorical of modern democratic writers not curbed by a libel law, and you realize how lightly he would reproduce the wildest gossip. But you have to understand, in addition, that Juvenal is not generally speaking of his own age. He wrote his famous "Satires" about the year 90 A. D.; and the sins of Messalina, which I have just quoted from him, had been perpetrated nearly half a century before that! No historian would accept such evidence.

Another scandal I have quoted, the folly of Elagabalus, is taken, with hundreds of other spicy stories, from a series of Latin lives of the Roman Emperors. It is anonymous, and historically almost worthless. More scandals are taken from the fiery and unscrupulous Christian rhetorician (writing long after the events) Lactantius.

One of the most serious contemporary critics of Roman luxury is Ammianus Marcellinus. An old and severe soldier, he returns from his campaigns to Rome, and, in disgust, describes what he sees. Such men do not usually examine very critically the material they use; yet even Ammianus, who is mainly concerned about effeminate luxury, says little about vice. St. Jerome, writing in the same age about the Christian priests and ladies of Rome, whom he knew well, has far more to say about immorality. Salvianus, a priest, writing in the next century, tells his Christian readers that the virtues of the pagans, who have disappeared, shame the vices of the Christians who have taken their place.

In fact, it is fairly easy to sum up the morals of the small wealthy class at Rome. To begin with, there was less adultery than there is now or was in the Middle Ages. Adultery was punished with death in Roman law. That law was rarely enforced, but intrigue might get a man impeached at any time. The first emperor, Octavian, who ruled for forty years during the most luxurious period of Rome, sternly enforced the law, to the extent of banishment for life, against his own passionately loved daughter Julia. That was "wicked" Rome. Now, for the same offense, a man passes with a smile through a divorce court.

That is Modernism. Until modern times there was, as a rule,

no penalty to pay at all, except to confess, and repeat, your "sin." That was Christendom.

Apart from intercourse with a married woman, a man was free in Roman (and all other) law. But there is no evidence that the middle and wealthy class of Rome were more free in practice than they are today. There was always a "fast set," and it grew larger under the bad emperors. These men gave, in their marble mansions with cedar ceilings, banquets which were orgies of choice wine and naked Syrian girls, while slaves in the roof poured perfume and flowers on the intoxicated guests. There is no reason whatever to think that this set was more numerous, proportionately, than the corresponding set which patronizes actresses and chorus-girls today, and sets up mistresses in luxurious apartments.

But these are just the things which "get into the papers." Virtue, which we so much admire, is uninteresting. Vice, which we deplore, fascinates us; and the more picturesque it is, the more readily we read about it.

Any real student of Roman literature will conclude that the great body of the men and women of Rome were as temperate and regular as we are. Really intimate and reliable pictures are best afforded by private letters, which reflect the character of the circle to which they belong. We have several volumes of such: the letters of Cicero, Pliny, Seneca, and Symmachus. Every single letter could have been read without a blush by Theodore Roosevelt. Bryan would have been disappointed in them. They reflect, in different centuries, circles in which vice is ignored, as a thing not done by gentlemen.

I have already said that the Stoic philosophy had a wonderful influence in Rome. Emperors were Stoics. Crowds followed Stoic orators like Dion Chrysostom, or read Stoic moralists like Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius. Most of the famous Roman jurists, the creators of European law, were Stoics: humanitarians of the highest character. A kind of blend of sober Stoicism and Epicureanism was the philosophy of life of the gentlemen of Rome. Their letters, and such works as the "Saturnalia" of Macrobius, a slave author who describes what is under his eyes in his master's house, give us the true measure of Roman character. It was generally fine.

The two leading authorities of our time on the subject are Gaston Boissier ("La religion romaine"), and Sir Samuel Dill, a Protestant ("Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius," "Roman Society in the Last Centuries of the Western Empire"). They agree in this verdict. Dill, in particular, analyzes the whole Roman literature for the first, fourth and fifth centuries, and he comes to the same conclusion that I have. The middle- and wealthy-class Romans, as a body, were as decent as we are. Another Protestant writer, a close student of Rome, Dr. Emil Reich, breaks

into indignation when he notices ("The History of Civilization," p. 371) how his religious colleagues slander Rome. "The average Roman gentleman," he says, "was a firm believer in the pure doctrines of the Stoa;" and he writes a long and glowing eulogy of what he sarcastically calls "these rotten Romans."

This Roman world, like the Greek world, produced moralists whose sentiments were the same as those of Christ. The Asiatic religions which celebrated the birth of a savior-god in mid-winter or the death and resurrection of a god in spring, became extremely popular in the Roman Empire and prepared the way for Christianity. The old Roman religion was actually suppressed and Christianity substituted by force for it: and the world sank into barbarism within a hundred years.

I here conclude this brief survey of the real morals and character and achievements of the great civilizations before Christ. No shining sword divides the history of the world into B. C. and A. D. It is ludicrous to repeat that these old civilizations lay in darkness and the shadow of death. We have seen how, in ethic and religious belief, they provide the whole material for the new religion.

CHAPTER XI

Phallic Elements in Religion

Modern Modesty—Phallism in the Old Testament—The Phallic Stage—Phallism Under Christianity

Modern Modesty

SCIENCE enables you to see the world grow. It produces a slow moving-picture of the unfolding of the epic of the universe. History enables you to see humanity grow. It produces a slow moving-picture of the unfolding of the drama of the race. The picture afforded by history is a part, selected and enlarged, of the great scientific picture of all reality. History is a brand of science.

In the moving-picture which history offers us no scene or series of scenes is so fascinating as the correct delineation of the progress of religion through the ages; and I would venture to say that the most piquant episode in the religious story is the growth of what is called "Christian reticence" precisely at a time when, and in proportion as, Christianity is disappearing.

There is nothing quite so amusing amongst the clotted errors of clerical eloquence as the suggestion that our manners will become grosser, our sex-impulses will burst every frail check and pour out like molten lava, if the old religion is discarded. Our manners have the delicacy of a painting by Watteau, of a fine Dresden vase, of an essay by Walter Pater, in comparison with the manners of our Christian predecessors.

As I walk the streets of London, I see prints and caricatures from the eighteenth century exhibited in the windows of curio shops. The police ignore them only because they are antiquities. The legs of fat Hanoverian dames and slim demi-mondaines are shown in every phase of disorder of clothing. I go to see plays by Fletcher; and only the boldest ladies will now venture to hear phrases which once made all London rock with laughter. I read "Tom Jones," or the plays of Sheridan, or "Venus and Adonis" and certain comedies of Shakespeare; and then I hear that an author has been dismissed from the French Academy for writing "La Garçonne," and that the police of Los Angeles have arrested an entire theatrical company for playing "Desire Under the Elms."

The irony of this new modesty—I mean, of this growth of modesty amidst the visible failing of the religion which claims to

have a monopoly of it—breaks upon one overpoweringly when one approaches the subject of the present chapter. If you reflect, you soon perceive that coarseness of phraseology lingers longest in religious literature. A Catholic maid would hardly mention the word "womb" in conversation except under compulsion and with a blush; but she repeats every night in the prayers, "Blessed is the fruit of the womb, Jesus." A good Protestant maid would have paralysis of the vocal organs if she tried to say "whore"; but it confronts her in her Bible, and flows sonorously from the lips of her preachers, over and over again. "Fornication" has almost dropped out of the dictionary; but not out of the Bible.

And these are but a few fragments of a great sex-candor which in earlier ages characterized all religion. An American maid wears a ring or a brooch with the name "mizpah" on it. She thinks, vaguely, that it is a charm, an omen of good luck. What in reality is it?

The learned dictionary sends you, or ought to send you, to the thirty-first chapter of Genesis. The Hebrew text has been discreetly translated, but you read plainly enough the following story: Jacob, the chosen of the Lord, has fled from his father-in-law, stealthily, with all his goods. Rachel, the chosen of Jacob, has stolen her father's "images": that is to say, the crude models of sex-organs to which Laban prays for the fertility of his cattle and wines. Laban follows in pursuit, to recover his precious carvings, and Rachel sweetly sits on them, on her camel, and lies to her father, saying that she has her monthly visitation and cannot rise. So Laban is cheated; and he and Jacob raise up a stone pillar,—that is, a rough image of the phallus, and swear on that sacred object what they will do to each other if either misbehaves again. And that is Mizpah; which the sweet young maid fingers tenderly on her ring on the way to church.

It is amazing what the world has forgotten and how, having forgotten, it has made fairy tales of the past. *Christian* reticence! Why, in the Middle Ages, when everybody who liked not the smell of his own burning flesh *was* a Christian, people handled phallic images as coolly as a medical student handles dead frogs. There were towns in the south of France where wax models of male organs hung in such bunches from the rafters of the church that when a wind blew, the worshipers complained that they were disturbed by the rattling.

There were towns in the center of France where, amongst the holy relics in the sacristy, was a withered thing which the priests represented to be the authentic phallus of the patron saint of the great church; and the end of it was red with the libations of wine which pious women had poured upon it.

There were towns in the north of France—I choose especially, "the eldest daughter of the Church"—where ancient phallic idols

had been turned into Christian saints, and had become objects of intense veneration. There were towns in Italy where, under the eyes of the Papacy (until Voltaireanism spread to Italy at the end of the eighteenth century), wax phallic images were, on the saint's great feast day, sold to women by the thousand and presented by them, unblushing, to the priests. There were scores of churches in Ireland where a woman with exposed parts was carved on the door for every woman and child to see. There were churches in England and churches in Spain with the same very pronounced lack of Christian reticence.

I will return later to these relics of phallic cult under the Christian rule. Some lingered until the great Rationalists of the eighteenth century grew strong. Some lingered, where Rationalism had no influence, until recent times. And now—in this age of Materialism and Skepticism and Neo-paganism—the police would not permit us to reproduce photographs of such of these religious symbols as we still have; and we have to cloak our very words with the veil of pagan languages to express these facts of the religious life!

By "phallic elements in religion" I mean the worship of the human generative powers and of carvings or models of the human sex-organs. Rabelais, in the pious Middle Ages, found twenty current words for everything connected with sex. In our "degenerate" days there is not one which we consider it decent to use. This short chapter will be mainly concerned with the veneration of models of the male organ; and I have to speak of it as the *phallos* or *penis* or *lingam,* which are, respectively, the Greek, Latin, and Hindu names for it. I am concerned to a less extent with the religious veneration of models of the female organ; and this must be spoken of as the *pudenda* or the *yoni,* the Latin and Hindu names. Finally, if, following the custom of learned experts, I have at times to speak of "ithyphallic," I must not venture to explain more closely than to say that the Greek word *ithys* means "straight" or "straight up."

These things are not mere technicalities. They suggest a most important truth: that, contrary to the dogmatic conviction of orthodox people, outspokenness about sex has been allied to religion almost all through the ages until modern times. What modern divine would write to ladies as St. Jerome, the greatest ascetic of the fourth century, wrote to the aristocratic Christian ladies of his day? What theologian or preacher would now dare to draw an illustration, as St. Augustine did, from the *fimus infantis,* or say that Priapus was deified *propter magnitudinem instrumenti sui?* To translate those phrases literally I should have to use words that have not appeared in print since the seventeenth century. And after the fourth century manners became grosser. Abelard, the most brilliant scholar of the Middle Ages, was castrated by the hirelings of a canon of the Paris cathedral. Saintly monks slept with saintly

nuns to prove their self-control. Women penitents were driven through the street in their smocks; and men were paraded in women's skirts lifted above the waist. But the list would be endless. We shall see enough of this later.

Why, then, it may be asked, disturb or offend this new modesty of the world, a product of Rationalist days, by going back over these strange sexual aberrations of religion? We have purified modern literature so much that—to quote a case within my knowledge—the English postal police open books from Germany and send back serious scientific works on sex; and their American colleagues imitate the prudery. We have forced Polynesian maids to wear our linens and calicoes: and die of pneumonia. We have tried to make even the Hindus hide their *lingam* and *yoni*. Never was there such a campaign of modesty in the world before.

A recent writer on Phallism says that to deal with religion and omit the phallic elements is like trying to produce "Hamlet" without the Prince of Denmark. We need not go so far. It is enough that phallic elements have had an extraordinary part in the development of religion, and it would be mere pedantry or prudery to ignore them. We may admit that some writers on the subject have exaggerated. They see phallic emblems in the bishop's mitre, the crozier, the church steeple and bell, the Catholic pyx and monstrance, the crescent and the cross, the mortar and pestle, and a thousand other things. It cannot even be regarded as proved that the cross is, as they say, an emblem of phallic origin, though it seems probable.

But apart from all these speculations, the phallic content of religion, in every continent, in all ages, has been extraordinary; and when nature-religions with such a content become ethical religions, the mingling of ancient "impurity" with the new zeal for "purity" affords one of the most grotesque spectacles in the human comedy. In ancient Babylonia, with all its zeal for purity, there seems to have been still some practice of sacred prostitution. We must trace steadily the growth of sexual religion which explains these and other phenomena.

The study will be of interest and importance also in helping us to understand ethical ideas about sex. There is a particular need for elucidating our ideas, for some strain of ancient thought still influences our moral judgments and leads to one of the most singular paradoxes of our time: the growth of a rebellion against "morality" in a generation which is the most moral the world has yet seen. We shall be much better able to understand this when we have studied the relation of religion to sex.

But is it worth while? Are we not merely poking into obscure corners of the religious past in search of these aberrations of the human mind? Not in the least. One of the most recent writers on the subject, Clifford Howard, observes that there are more than a

hundred million actual phallic worshipers today in India alone, and three times as many in the world ("Sex Worship"). One of the leading British authorities on the science of religion, Sidney Hartland, shows in a long article (Phallism) in the "Dictionary of Ethics and Religion," that the phallic cult has spread over the entire world in all ages. The most recent writer on the subject, J. B. Hannay—not to speak of older authorities like Payne Knight and General Farlong—traces phallism into nearly every field of the religious life. But we will at once establish the importance of the subject from the point of view of this book, by tracing phallic elements in the Bible itself.

PHALLISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the book of Exodus (xxv 10, to xxvii 19, and xxxvi 8, to xxxviii 31) there are two long descriptions of the "Tabernacle" or glorified tent, which was the Hebrew place of worship until Solomon is supposed to have built his gorgeous temple.

As I show in "The Forgery of the Old Testament," Exodus is a fifth-century forgery, very obviously fabricated by the Jewish priests when they saw, and were envious of, the power of the Babylonian priests. But this description is so minute and precise that readers of the Bible have, until modern times, never had the least doubt that it was written at the time of the making of the Tabernacle. We now see, on examining the account closely, not only that the material could not possibly have been got by the Hebrews in "the desert," but that the details of the construction are contradictory and the whole plan impracticable. It is a sheer literary fiction by a priest with a lively imagination.

But there is one point in this fiction, ignored by the learned critical divines, to which J. B. Hannay calls attention. Read your Exodus, xxvi. The great tent was to have a covering of goats' skins, of "rams' skins dyed red," and of "badgers' skins." The last word is, notoriously, a mistranslation of an obscure word, and Mr. Hannay suggests "dolphins' skins." In any case, these coverings are, if you can find your way amongst the bewildering details of the description, so drawn over at one end to meet in a closed slit through which the high priest forces his way dramatically during the great festival, that, if you care to draw the result (inner layer of fine skins, round this sheepskin dyed red, and round this hairy goat skin) with a child's colored crayons, you will burn the drawing at once, lest your wife or daughter see it.

Mr. Hannay, whose learning and industry are prodigious, is one of those phallic writers who find the emblems everywhere; but I do not see how any person can read these details and not admit the phallic meaning. The "Tabernacle" never existed, except on paper, but divines justly conclude that there was some sort of large tent for the "ark of the covenant" during the wandering in

the desert and until some sort of temple was built by somebody. The priestly writer of Exodus seems to have incorporated and glorified the description of this tent in his piece of fiction. It was phallic.

When you realize what the "Feast of Tabernacles" was, you are more disposed to believe this. The Greek writer Plutarch must have shocked the Jews of his time by describing it, quite honestly, as a Dionysiac festival: a feast in honor of the Hebrew equivalent of the god Dionysus or Bacchus. In effect, it was. Even conservative divines admit that it was the harvest festival; and so it is clear that the priests, in recasting the religion and history of the Jews, had seized upon this old and popular festival and—as was done all over the world—given it a new religious meaning. It was to be celebrated in memory of the sojourn in tents in the desert.

It was the gayest of all Jewish feasts. For seven days the people lived in tents, made of the branches of olive, pine, myrtle, and palm trees, on the roofs of their houses or in the streets and open spaces. Wine and love were, as in harvest festivals all the world over, the chief rites of the great festival. Little bowers of fragrant vine and myrtle branches were inspiring places of retreat for the young folk. There were mysterious libations, which no one now understands; but libations constitute one of the chief and most significant rites of the phallic cult. There was a grand illumination of the women's court at night. There was continual music and dancing. And there were mysterious wands or rods of intertwined branches to be borne in the hand by everybody; just as in the Greek Bacchanalia, the great feast of wine and sex.

If it seems to anybody that this sex-element was just a human importation into a purely "religious" festival, let us invite him to turn back to the really older parts of the Old Testament. The priestly writers of Exodus lived, as their language alone would suffice to show, only about 500 B. C.; though bits of more archaic language are embedded in their work. These oldest sections are two documents, cut into fragments and put in a piece here and a piece there, known as the Jahvist and Elohist documents. They may go back to the tenth century, and are chiefly used in Genesis. Naturally, they have been modified by the later priestly compilers, but we shall see that they are still eloquent. Palestine was one great region of phallic cult, and the early Hebrews were as naïve and jealous in it as their neighbors.

You never noticed this? You think that it may be one of these fanciful interpretations of modern scholars? Well, one reason why the ordinary Bible reader may escape noticing it is that the English translation of the Old Testament, though gross enough in its sonorous language about whoring and fornication, really tones down the original. The Hebrew text itself had, in fact, been modified by the Rabbis who expressly said that much of it required

"modernizing," as we say, even two thousand years ago. The "revealed" word was too crude to meet the merely pagan eye of other nations.

Sometimes, in fact, the translation of the text is legitimate enough, yet it really conceals the grossness of the writer and of those for whom he wrote. "Male and female created he them," says Genesis (i, 27). What is wrong with that? Only that the word *nequebah*, which is translated "female," means "the thing to be bored"; and that was the ancient Hebrew conception of woman —that and nothing more. (The word for male, *zakhar*, is, by the way, given by some phallic writers as meaning "borer." This is incorrect. It means "memory"). The story of the Fall is just as crudely sexual.

But we will avoid subtleties, and take a broad view of this early history embedded in the fiction of Genesis. I give up in despair "the sons of God" who had intercourse with "the daughters of men," and begot a race of giants and of people so wicked that God had to destroy nearly the whole race. Apparently the human race, though cursed from the start, would have got on tolerably morally if these mysterious "sons of God" had not interfered with its daughters. The whole of this is, however, Babylonian fiction, as we have seen. What one might plausibly claim to be to some extent a history of the Hebrews begins in Chapter xii.

Notice, however, a very peculiar episode in Chapter ix, the well-known story of the curse of Ham (and the black race). Noah "was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent." Ham had some reason to go in, and he "saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without." Just what any youth would do. Yet we are asked to believe that these two Hebrew youths in the semi-barbaric period of the race walked backward to cover their father, that Noah "knew what his younger son had done unto him," and that God's heavy curse fell upon the frivolous Ham and his posterity forever! Daniel, the great king, danced naked centuries afterwards before all the people and God. Prophets stalked the land naked, and were proud of it. But we are asked to believe that in the very crudest days of the race there was a sexual delicacy equal to that of the most refined home in modern Philadelphia!

There is here some mystery, surely. Some of the old Rabbis said that what Ham really did was to castrate his father; and they point out that Noah dies in the next verse. As, however, Noah is understood to have been about nine hundred and fifty years old (and the "boys" about nine hundred) . . . . We will not try to fathom the mystery this way. A modern scholar, Dr. Maurer, suggests in an article on Hebrew phallism (in the German "Globus," 1907) that the real meaning is that sex was tabu in ancient Judea. I should say that it was precisely the opposite, and

that Ham (if there is anything at all in the old story) did commit some outrage; and we shall at once see that this is more likely.

In Chapter xxiv, 2, Abraham calls his eldest servant and says: "Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh," by way of a solemn oath. Israel (xlvii, 29) even in civilized Egypt calls his distinguished son Joseph to swear a solemn oath in the same peculiar way. Naturally the translation is euphemistic. The most solemn oath of the Hebrews—and they had a great variety—was to swear with your hand on a man's testicles. It is a familiar oriental idea, common amongst the Arabs in recent times, and curiously enough the Latin word for those organs and for witnesses is, as we see in our words "testicles" and "testimony," the same.

Which again raises a suspicion that "the ark of the testimony" was a receptacle, representing the female organ, containing male emblems. Phallic writers are sure of this, but we cannot prove it.

What was in the "ark" was a deadly secret; though later priestly writers said that their legendary "tables of the law" were in it. Modern divines scout the idea that the law would be thus stored in secret, and say that old sacred stones of some sort or other were in the box. And when we learn that phallic stones were sacred all over the region, and that, on one occasion, when enemies stole the ark, the punishment took the form of widespread syphilis (euphemistically translated "emerods"), there is reasonable ground to conclude that the center of the original Hebrew religion was a phallic emblem. The ark and its contents mysteriously disappeared when, at the time of the Babylonian captivity, the priests fabricated a more civilized religion.

In short, the old Hebrew religion was saturated with phallic elements until it was destroyed in the fifth century, under the inspiration of Persia and Babylonia. The Old Testament, though notoriously a fifth-century compilation, plainly tells us the situation.

THE PHALLIC STAGE

The phallic cult blends with the most intense desires of man himself. The worship and propitiation of other gods is a necessary evil, a burden. It is purely utilitarian. But the cult of the god of love is in the most perfect harmony with man's most powerful impulse. The human element mingles with the religious. The phallus grows larger, the orgy more frequent.

That is one of the reasons for the universality and intensity of the phallic cult, and for the obstinacy with which it persists under and defeats ethical religions like the Hebrew, the Babylonian, the Egyptian, and even the Christian. Man really believes in the efficacy of the cult; but he also likes it. So the phallic cult has never been destroyed. It lingered in Europe openly until this skeptical age created modesty. But in our own day it is simply assuming new

forms—close dancing, the revue, new music, sex-novels and so on —just as in the most religious of Christians (saintly nuns, etc.) it assumed new forms. Let us turn to Asia, and we find the phallic cult, even in our own time, as intense as ever, and very impatient of European and American restraints. In the Mongolian world it is not pronounced. Sex flows in well-ordered channels; the domestic life and the quite respectable brothel. It is as intense as elsewhere, but it long ago ceased to have a special religious significance.

Japan, which was civilized long after China, is more instructive. When the country began to be modernized in the early seventies, Americans were astounded to find, amongst one of the most sober and virtuous nations of the globe, an open and common exhibition of phallic emblems. In many of the old Shinto temples the statues of the gods were ithyphallic. Missionaries pronounced them obscene, and they disappeared. But the Japanese could scarcely even understand what the missionaries meant. A friend of mine who lived in Japan in those early days told me that the people of a certain coast-village were told that, in deference to the peculiar feeling of these English and Americans, there must be no more mixed bathing, nude, in the summer time. So they, instead of making costumes, separated the sexes by a rope.

But India is the classic land of phallic worship. There is no doubt that the Hindus took over the phallic cult from this original population of the peninsula. In all the islands south of India we find an intense phallic cult. In the Barbar Archipelago we find a symbol of the sun in the shape of a man with stuffed phallus and testicles, and it is honored with orgies of sexual enjoyment. The man has a club which (as in most of the analogous cases, Hercules, etc.) originally represented a phallus. Phallism is often thus associated with sun-worship. In this case it is also associated with the crocodile, the emblem of bravery. The most religious needs of the tribes are progeny and strength. "The gods we serve are the gods who serve us," said the great American Pragmatist.

In the Nias Islands, off Sumatra, the natives draw ithyphallic figures of their ancestors on the walls of their houses, and pray to them for progeny. In New Guinea—a much lower level, the Melanesian, at which phallism begins—certain tribes have special sleeping places for the youths and unmarried men. It sounds cloistral and virtuous; but in point of fact the walls are covered with ithyphallic figures of men and of sexual intercourse.

Celebes is a hot-bed of phallism: or was, until the Dutch began a campaign against it. Female figures with exaggerated breasts and pudenda and ithyphallic figures of males were carved all over the temples. In some temples the detached organs were represented in the act of commerce. In southern Celebes there is a phallic deity, Karaeng Iowe, who has a body of priestesses, and is served with flowers and candles, especially on the two great annual festivals.

Karaeng Iowe is a general god, but the deity of fertility in particular; and his usual emblems are the male and female organs. Ithyphallic gold figures also are found. Other tribes of the island have a god whose name actually means "the Phallus of the Ulisiwa." In old days the natives had an ithyphallic statue of him seven feet high which was regarded with great pride and veneration. When the Dutch interfered with the cult, the natives hid the statue and worshiped it secretly for years.

Java also is intensely phallic. In some parts it is customary, at the time of the blossoming of the rice, for the proprietor of the field and his wife to go round it naked and have intercourse on it. This half-magical, half-religious recipe for a good harvest was not unknown in medieval Europe.

An amusing illustration of the inveterate phallism of the Javanese is given by an old writer. The Dutch had left an old cannon in a field, and the belief spread that it was a phallic god of the Europeans. Rice and fruit were offered to it and, with the full encouragement of the local priests, it was worshiped daily. Barren women, particularly, sought its aid. They would deck themselves in their best clothes—which are extremely elaborate and handsome in Java—and sit astride it, often two at a time, to the great amusement of European laymen and the scandal of the missionaries. The Dutch government was compelled to remove the deity.

PHALLISM UNDER CHRISTIANITY

Let us say at once that Christianity, when it got the power, abolished all public manifestations of a phallic cult. That was of the very essence of its message. On its ethical side it was part of the reaction, felt throughout the Greco-Roman world, against the cult of sex. Apollonius of Tyana, Plutarch, Dion Chrysostom, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Julian, Seneca—the world was full of moralists and ascetics denouncing these things. The religions of Mithra, Serapis, and Manichaeus, and the philosophies of the Platonists and Neo-Platonists, the Stoics, and the Epicureans, were all trying to abolish them; and with more success than Christianity until the church got and used political power.

I am trying to give all relevant facts and to avoid all excesses of language or judgment. Christianity was bound to denounce phallism because it was in large part a campaign against sex-pleasure, if not all pleasure, and because it did not care a cent about the social aspect of fertility and progeny. It cut the two roots of phallism: the individual love of pleasure and the social concern about the supply of citizens and soldiers. I do not admire it for either stroke; but this is no place to decide between the "lilies and languors of virtue" and "the roses and raptures of vice."

Our modern age would probably coldly judge that the suppression of the phallic cult was quite sensible—these old semi-

magical forms to secure fertility were childish and futile but nothing to get excited about, and it was a pity sober men instead of ascetical fanatics had not charge of the work. The temples and graves of Ephesus, Antioch, Baalbek, Alexandria, etc., were "purified"; that is to say, a vast amount of beautiful works of art were destroyed. Women no longer sat on the organ of Priapus; but they were driven to the opposite and more deplorable extreme of forswearing love for life under the promise of a larger share of a legendary heaven. Matrons no longer gave each other phallic cakes; but they had to go to church, like criminals, after childbirth to be "purified."

And the vicious element in this puritan reaction was not long concealed. I am not going here to follow some of the writers on phallism in their discovery of phallic emblems all through the new religion. Christ called Cephas "Peter," they say; which means a "rock"—the Old Testament phallic term! It is waste of time. If Christ ever did this—he certainly did not—phallic significance would be the last thing in his mind. He loathed sex, probably being an Essenian monk. Then there is the Holy Spirit as a dove: precisely the emblem of the phallic goddess! Yes: also the bird of Noah's ark and the emblem of innocence, the Moslem bird of peace, and so on.

So it is with the fish, the ring, the mitre, the staff, the nave of a church, etc., etc. Those who wish may look for phallic significance in them. Even the cross was certainly not phallic in the mind of the early Christians; and it is impossible to find any positive evidence of its having a phallic origin. Cretans and Egyptians and others had it ages before the Christians. I have seen a perfect Greek cross in marble in the little chapel at Cnossos (Crete); and it is certainly fifteen hundred years older than the Greek church. We do not know what it meant; but it does not in the slightest degree suggest sex organs and was clearly not phallic. The Egyptian cross is more suggestive. It is plausible that this was originally a sex-emblem; and that is all we can say about it.

I turn to a far more serious and substantial point. Christianity nominally suppressed phallism on its positive side. It began to get power after the conversion of Constantine, in the fourth century. By the end of the fourth century all the phallic temples had gone up in smoke. By the end of the fifth century all the "pagans" (villagers) even had ceased to worship Cybele, Astarte, Aphrodite, Isis, Venus, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, Tammuz, Dionysus, and all the rest of the unholy family. Mary was substituted for Cybele-Isis-Ishtar; Jesus replaces Mithra-Tammuz-Osiris. The "pale Galilean"—or, rather, a pale priest at Milan named Ambrose—had conquered.

But Christianity was itself essentially an expression of the negative result of phallism, the ascetic reaction against it; and the

result was deplorable. If Christianity had really won the world, as believers think, if Christian virtue had generally replaced pagan vice, we should still have to lay a tremendous indictment against it. The Protestant at last discovered the blunder, he might say the blasphemy, of all this fasting and hair-shirting and celibacy, and so on; but he never noticed the ghastly futile sacrifices which the Christian creed had meantime imposed upon the race for a thousand years—that is to say, if his version of the triumph of Christianity is true.

I have referred to the great temple of Aphrodite at Paphos, in Cyprus, where a white conical stone, anointed in feast-days, was the emblem of the goddess. Paphos is now Kuklia: one of these miserable villages which for two thousand years have sprawled over the site of all the glory of the Greco-Roman world. As late as 1896 a British traveler, D. G. Hogarth, describing his visit to Kuklia ("A Wandering Scholar in the Levant"), wrote that he found the peasants of the district still, once a year, solemnly anointing the corner stones of the ruined temple of Aphrodite! They recited charms, and made passes through perforated stones, to remove the barrenness of their women and increase the virility of their men. Moslems and Christians joined in the phallic rites, and both said that they did this "in honor of the maid of Bethlehem."

And this survival of the phallic cult in its most naked form is typical of what happened all over Europe and the Near East. I have said that the most orgiastic of the phallic cults, that of Dionysus, came to Greece from Thrace, which was then a part of primitive, barbaric Europe. As late as the year 1906 (I cannot ascertain if it continues, but probably), the Greek Christians in the village round Viza, which is the old capital of Thrace (Bizye), had annually a kind of sacred drama or pantomime, in which the chief performer had a large wooden phallus. Girls represented "brides," and he chased them, and captured and "married" one. He and the girl then danced "obscenely" in the streets and collected money; and the whole affair ended in a general orgy.

At the other end of Europe, in Scandinavia, the phallus similarly figured in popular plays until recent times. In Ireland the female figure pointing to or contemplating her pudenda, known to Celtic scholars as Sheila-na-gig, was often inserted in the keystone of the arch of the church-door—to avert the evil eye. There was one until recent years on a doorway of Cloyne Cathedral, in Cork. There is one exhibited in the Royal Irish Academy at Dublin.

There were similar figures on churches, in Britain (and in Spain). The Reformation has destroyed most of them, but Dr. Hartland mentions one in Herefordshire and another in Cornwall. There are phallic stones still surviving in many parts of England. A photograph of one in Dorsetshire lies before me: a four-foot

high realistic model of the penis. In the same county, on Trendle Hill, is the figure, but in the turf, of the "Cerne Giant," one hundred and eighty feet long: a nude giant with monstrous phallus and a club (a phallus). It is still cleaned every seven years. And every English village once had its "May-Pole," which, whether its significance was locally remembered or not, seems unquestionably to have been originally phallic.

These, you may say, are remote things that may have escaped the vigilant eye of Rome (on the door of a cathedral!). Let us get nearer to Rome; and the nearer we go, the worse it is.

At Isernia, in the Abruzzi, there used to be an extremely popular festival every year on the feast of Sts. Cosmas and Damian; saints of very equivocal origin. People flocked from all parts, particularly barren women and people with venereal disease. The stalls in the streets were covered with phallic images in wax, and the women bought them and presented them in church. Men and women with venereal disease bared themselves, and were smeared by the priests with the holy oil of the saints. This went on, and had gone on from time immemorial, until the ring of Voltairean laughter compelled the Vatican to interfere in 1780.

At Alatri, much nearer Rome, there are phalli on the walls of the buildings (and were formerly in other parts of Italy). Now, on Easter Sunday, it is the fashion to turn out and stone the wicked emblems. But, since they still survive, one can easily gather how short a time it is since this custom began. Christian Italy kissed the phalli: semi-Rationalist Italy stones them. And, as Dr. Hartland observes, you will probably find women and girls in the crowd of laughing "zealots" wearing little gold phalli as amulets. In the ancient form of a closed fist with the thumb peeping out between the first and second fingers (the *fico*) this phallic emblem is still very common among the Catholic peasantry. In the Portici Museum there is an old *altar* vessel with a woman embracing a phallus engraved on it. At Trani a Priapean figure, known as "the holy member" figured until recently in the carnival.

You will note how these are all remnants of the medieval past which the church is now hiding. How extensive the cult was in the Middle Ages is best seen in France, where the Protestantism of the Huguenots has called our attention to such things.

When, in 1585, the Protestants took Embrun, they found in the sacristy an object, reddened at the end by libations of wine poured on it by barren women, which the priests had from time immemorial represented as the phallus of St. Foutin. The saint was said to have been the first Christian bishop of Lyons, and his cult spread over the entire region. Wax models of his celebrated organ were everywhere. Churches in the south of France had bunches of phalli hanging like candles from the roof. Sex cakes were sold and exchanged as freely as in ancient Greece. Barren

women used to go out to the ancient (Neolithic) standing stones and rub against them. In fact, any upright stone would do; and in places the statues of the saints were found more convenient.

Who "St. Foutin" really was we can guess from the cult of "St. Guerlichon" (or Greluchon) in the Diocese of Bourges. The saint was an ancient ithyphallic statue so popular that the monks had to Christianize it and give it a legend. Women scraped a little off his phallus and drank it in water. In very many places in France and Belgium the phallic cult survived in this way. St. Ters in Belgium, St. Giles in Brittany, St. Réné of Anjou, and other famous saints of "the land of saints" grew out of old ithyphallic statues. That of St. Arnaud wore an apron, which was lifted only for barren women. At Orange, in the church of St. Eutropius, there was a wooden phallus covered with leather. It was greatly venerated and sought.

These are a few indications of the failure of the church to suppress phallism in practice. Rome officially stamped out the phallic cult; and Rome quietly winked at it everywhere. And this is only part of the immense story of the vagaries of the phallic sentiment under the Roman repression. Witchcraft was a Europe-wide result. The Flagellants of the Middle Ages—the crowds that went about scourging themselves from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries —were phallic. The dancing mania was an expression of the morbidly repressed sex-sentiment. The unnatural vice which spread over the whole clerical world when celibacy was enforced, the almost universal license of nuns and monks, and at the other end of the scale, the fantastic "ecstasies" of nuns like St. Catherine and St. Teresa and the fearful self-mutilation of holy monks, were all outcomes of the attempt to repress sex.

All that we can say is that the *ancient* phallic cults were dead because the ancient phallic deities were dead: because Christians now naturally looked to God and Mary to remove their barrenness —as a rule. But do not imagine that this led to a purification of the sex-morals of Europe.

CHAPTER XII

Did Jesus Ever Live?

The Modern Denial—The Fiction of the Gospels—Jewish and Pagan Witnesses—A Broad View

The Modern Denial

THERE were hundreds of Jesuses. A life of the Rabbi Hillel, if we had one suitably embroidered with miracles, would be a life of Jesus. A life of the slave-moralist, Epictetus, if we had one, would be a perfect life of Jesus. The life which we have of the wandering apostle Apollonius of Tyana *is* a life of Jesus. The chief teachings, even the phrases and sentiments to a great extent, were common to priests of Isis, Serapis, Esmun, Apollo, Mithra, Ahura-Mazda, and Jahveh, as well as wandering Stoic apostles.

Every single moral sentiment attributed to Christ in the Gospels has several parallels in the literature of the time. There is not one point in the "teaching of Christ" that was new to the world. Even the parables were borrowed from the Jewish Rabbis. The chief doctrinal features of the Christ of the Gospels—the birth, death, and resurrection—were familiar myths at the time, and were borrowed from "the pagans."

What we see, in fact, is evolution in religion. The ideas pass on from age to age, a mind here and a mind there adding or refining a little. The slow river of human evolution had entered its rapids. The mingling of twenty nations in a series of world-empires had brought about such a clash of ideas as the world had never seen since until our time. Every possible shade of moral idealism and religious thought was represented, from Alexandria to Rome. You could blot Christ out of the history of the first three centuries of the "Christian Era"—what happened after that is a different matter, as we shall see in due time—and it would make no more difference than cutting a single tree out of a well-wooded landscape.

Blot out Christ! Yes, that is what many serious scholars are now attempting to do, and we must consider that first. It is, to the Rationalist, to any man who resents this long distraction of the race by the Christian religion, a tempting proposition. Suppose we could prove that there never had been on this earth such a person as Jesus! What an ironic consummation! Yet this modern denial is

so weighty that we find so cautious and courtly an authority as Sir J. G. Frazer writing, in his introduction to Dr. P. L. Couchoud's recent "Enigma of Jesus," that "whether Dr. Couchoud be right or wrong" in denying the historicity of Jesus, "he appears to have laid his finger on a weak point in the chain of evidence on which hangs the religious faith of a great part of civilized mankind."

THE FICTION OF THE GOSPELS

The less learned of the clergy pour fine scorn on the modern denial of the historicity of Jesus. It is a humorous illustration, they say, of the extravagances of the spirit of denial. There is a legend amongst them that an archbishop once showed that on the same principles you could prove that Napoleon I never existed: which certainly would be a humorous thing to do, as there were plenty of people still living in the archbishop's time who had actually seen Napoleon! I have myself known old ladies who remembered his death.

The ordinary believer is startled by, and is apt to be impatient of, the very question which forms the title of this chapter. But a very little reflection, if he will condescend to it, will show him that it is a quite serious question. A number of characters whose historical existence was as certain as the sun to whole ages—King Arthur, Homer, William Tell, etc.—have proved to be legendary. Adam is certainly a legend: Moses and Abraham are most probably legends: Zarathustra is doubtful. If the historicity of Jesus is so very certain, there must be some quite indisputable witnesses to it. Who are they?

The Gospels. Now, just as science is said to be "organized common sense," so modern scientific history organizes or directs common sense in these matters. Who wrote the Gospels? No one knows. They are entitled "According to Matthew," etc., not "by Matthew," etc., in the oldest Greek manuscripts and in early references to them. Indeed, even if they professed to be written by Matthew, etc., it would not follow that they were. But they do not profess this. Many scholars think, on very slender grounds, that the third Gospel was actually written by Luke. We shall see; though it matters little for our purpose, as the writer expressly says that he was not an eye-witness. He is, he says (i, 1-3), writing down for a friend, as "many" others have done before him, an account of what they have *heard* about Jesus.

What we want to know about the Gospels is whether the men who wrote them were in a position to know the facts. In ordinary history we ask two questions about any writer: what was his knowledge of the facts, and is he truthful? In dealing with religious documents, especially Oriental documents, we have to be particularly critical. Let me illustrate this.

About twenty years ago Mr. Myron H. Phelps wrote an account ("Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi") of the origin of the new Babi or Bahai religion which was then finding adherents in America. It arose out of the teaching of a Persian reformer, Ali Mohammed, called "the Bab" (gate). Like Christ, but in the year 1844 A. D., Ali Mohammed set out to reform the accepted creed and to bring people back to the worship of a purely spiritual God. He and hundreds of his followers were put to death, in 1850, by a combination of Persian priests and government; and what Sir J. G. Frazer calls "the bribe of immortality" had no place in the faith of those fearless martyrs. But the significant point is this: two or three years after the death of the Bab his life was written, and it was a purely human account of a Christ-like man; but some decades later a new life appeared richly embroidered with miracles in the Gospel manner!

What happened in the East in the nineteenth century could, surely, happen in the first century. If these lives of Jesus, the Gospels, were not written until some decades after his death, we must read them with great caution. The American Fundamentalist, who is the last to realize this, ought to be the first. He knows well how Catholic enthusiasm still makes miracles at Lourdes and St. Anne. Enthusiasm, even innocently, always glorifies its cause with miracles. In the early days of Spiritualism an eminent British judge published some remarkable experiences he had had a few years before; and he was compelled, in great confusion, to admit that his memory was entirely wrong and he had misstated the facts in every important detail.

It is therefore most important to know when the Gospels were written. If they were not written until several decades after the death of Christ—if the stories about Christ passed merely from mouth to mouth in an Oriental world for a whole generation at least after his death—it is neither reasonable nor honest to put implicit faith in them. There were no journals in those days. Few people could read and write. Moreover, the Jews were scattered over the earth by the Romans in the year 70 A. D.; and the Christians had previously been scattered by the Jews themselves. What should we make of a story going from mouth to mouth in such conditions as these for several decades?

However, let us approach the subject on common-sense lines. How are we to test whether the writers of the Gospels knew the facts and did not merely put on parchment what was being said in the obscure and scattered Christian communities? Some Christian writers try to apply what are called internal tests. They say that the description of places and customs and daily life in Judea is so confident and precise in the Gospels that the writers were evidently familiar with the country in the time of Christ.

Tests of this kind are very delicate and uncertain. In one of

Mr. H. G. Wells' novels—"Marriage," I think—the story is partly located in Labrador, which is minutely and accurately described. I found that few people had any doubt but that Wells had been there. But, when the able novelist was writing that book, he told me that he had just collected all the available books on Labrador and was "steeping himself" in the subject. He has never been near Labrador. Similarly, Prescott, the vivid American historian of the conquest of Mexico and Peru, never saw either land. He was blind.

A careful writer can easily "get up" a country in this way. Keeping common sense as our guide, however, we will not suppose that a number of early Christians "got up" Galilee and Judea in order to write lives of Jesus. In point of fact, they have only a very general and often inaccurate knowledge. Mark is generally admitted to be the oldest Gospel, and it is by no means detailed and precise in topography. In others, such as Luke, there are historical errors. Luke admittedly did *not* know Judea.

But we need not linger over tests of this sort. Take the book of Daniel. It is as vivid and precise and circumstantial as any Gospel; and it is quite demonstrably a forgery written centuries after the time it describes. We should say the same of a very great deal of the Old Testament. Such tests are useless. They would break down hopelessly in Homer. They would prove that Dante had really visited hell. They would make Keats a native of Corinth.

The first condition of any confidence in the Gospels is to ascertain that the writers lived within a reasonable time of the events described; and one hundred and fifty years of biblical scholarship have not succeeded in finding any proof of that. At present the general opinion is that Mark, the oldest Gospel, was written between 65 and 70 A. D.; and Matthew and Luke in the last decade of the first century; and John in the second century. Mark, it will be remembered, knows nothing about the miraculous birth of Christ; the first account of that turns up at least ninety years after the supposed event!

Moreover, the resurrection story and other details are not supposed, and cannot be proved by anybody, to have been in Mark by the year 70. Scholars have come to the conclusion that there existed at first a simple sketch of the life of Jesus which is the groundwork of the first three Gospels (and is best seen in Mark) and a collection of teachings which is most used by Matthew. At what date this sketch was written nobody knows. What precisely was in it nobody knows. You cannot put your finger on a single verse and say that it is part of the *original* Gospel. And, even if you could, there is not a scrap of evidence that it was written within thirty years of the death of Christ. Remember Ali Mohammed and his miracles!

If a religious reader thinks that he can dismiss all this as "Higher Criticism stuff," and points out how much these critics

have changed their theories and how contradictory they are, let him reflect on his own position. He trusts the Gospels without any evidence whatever; without making the least inquiry into their authority. His preachers dogmatically say that the Gospels were "inspired"—though the opening verses of Luke plainly say the contrary—and he takes their word as simply as a child does.

This "Higher Criticism," which he hears so much reviled, is a very serious and conscientious effort of Christian divines, sustained now for more than a hundred years, to prove that the Gospels are worthy of ordinary historical credence. It has failed. The miraculous birth, the death on the cross, the resurrection and ascension, and the healing miracles, it is compelled to sacrifice altogether. By great effort it then concludes that some sort of small Gospel or life of Jesus was in existence thirty years after the death of Christ; but that is too late to be reliable, and no one knows exactly what it said.

Moreover, while there is no evidence at all that the Gospels, *our* Gospels, existed before the end of the first century, there is very serious evidence that they did not. *No Christian writer mentions one of our four Gospels until a hundred years after the death of Christ or makes any clear and certain quotation from any one of them.* That is serious, surely. Yes, you may say, if it is true; but it may be another bit of Higher Criticism or of Rationalism. It is not. It is the very serious verdict of a committee of historians and divines appointed to study this question by the Oxford (University) Society of Historical Theology, an ecclesiastical society. They courageously published this disappointing result of their labors in "The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers" (1905).

Pope St. Clement of Rome, for instance, wrote an important letter, which we have, about 96 A. D.; and a second letter bearing his name, though probably a Christian forgery, was written later. About the same time, or a little earlier, there were the so-called "Epistle of Barnabas" and the first part of the "Teaching of the Apostles." These never quote from, or refer to, the Gospels. For the first three decades of the second century we have the second part of the "Teaching," the "Pastor" (supposed to be by "Hermas"), and letters of Bishops Ignatius and Polycarp. Not one of these mentions the Gospels or makes a clear quotation from them. They quote certain words which roughly correspond to words in Matthew, Luke and (at a late date) John; but this proves nothing, as by the second century these sayings of Christ certainly circulated in the Church. We must say the same of the "Sayings of Our Lord" (or "Logia"), a second-century fragment containing seven "sayings," two of which are in the Gospels. It has no significance whatever, unless it be to discredit the Gospels. The writer clearly knew of no Gospel collections.

It is not until about 140 or 150 A. D. that Christian writers

refer to and quote from the Gospels. They are clearly known to Justin, Marcion and Papias. The latter, the Bishop of Herapolis, an ignorant and credulous man who writes a good deal which nobody now believes, is known to us only from quotations in the fourth century historian Eusebius; a man who notoriously held that the use of statements to the Church was more important than their accuracy. This fourth-century quotation of a second-century obscure bishop is the only "serious" evidence for the Gospels! Papias says that he learned from older men that Mark and Matthew really wrote Gospels. That is not evidence that any historian would credit, and, in fact, divines do not believe it.

In order to realize the full significance of this, it is necessary to know a little more about the early Christian world than a Christian usually knows. He imagines just a loyal group of virtuous men and women meeting secretly here and there, at Corinth or Ephesus or Thessalonica, to break bread and pray to Jesus. On the contrary, from about 50 to 150 A. D., early Christianity was a most intense ferment of contradictory speculations. Greek, Persian, Jewish, Egyptian, and all kinds of religious ideas were blended with Christianity. We know the names of at least a score of Christian intellectual leaders and sects of the time. Gradually, of course, these people were thrust outside the Church and called "Gnostics"; but in the first century and the early part of the second Christian communities everywhere swarmed with these mystics.

It was in such a world that the Gospels gradually took shape. The idea of the average believer, that someone sat down one day and, under inspiration, wrote a "Gospel according to Matthew," and so on, is naïvely unhistorical. The writer of Luke indicates what happened. For decades the faithful merely talked about Christ. Men like Paul went from group to group, much as the cheapest types of revivalists do today, and talked about Jesus. Probably few of them could read, in any case; and Paul, to judge by his Epistles, had very little to say about an earthly life of Jesus. Then, here and there, some who could write put upon parchment what was being said. All sorts of wild and contradictory stories about Jesus were going about. Our four Gospels are just four that were selected in the fourth century out of a large number. These little biographies and lists of "sayings" grew larger and larger. There was no central authority to check them; the various communities were a day's, or even a week's, journey apart; and travel was costly for poor folk. There was not the slightest approach to what we call standardization.

So it is mere waste of time to write a Life of Jesus by a sort of intelligent selection of what you think is probable in the Gospels. All the Rationalist and other such biographies, from Strauss and Renan to Papini, are just subjective compilations. You may think it probable that Jesus really did this or that, but you cannot

call it an historical fact because it is in the Gospels. The figure of Jesus, the biography, grew, as time went on. And, since that growth took place, during at least half a century of unchecked speculation and argumentation, in a world of Oriental mysticism and theosophy, you see the strength of the writers who hold that Jesus (as many of the Gnostics held) never was a man at all.

JEWISH AND PAGAN WITNESSES

On the very day on which I begin to write this chapter, the leading Sunday newspaper of Britain, the *Observer,* has a prominent article on "Jesus Christ in History." The pretext of it—a claim that new evidence has been found—I will discuss presently; but a part of the article must have surprised many people.

The writer is an orthodox and respected English theologian, Dr. Burch. He is going to publish a book about this supposed new evidence for the historicity of Jesus. Meantime, as his publishers naturally will not allow him to give away the great secret, he writes articles in connection with it.

In this article he deals with "the scantiness of references to Christ in the histories which have come down to us." He quotes "the ablest Jewish book on the whole subject," Klausner's recent "Jesus of Nazareth"; and he shows that, in the way of non-biblical witnesses to Christ, we have only "twenty-four lines" from Jewish and pagan writers, and four of those are spurious. Of the twenty genuine lines twelve (which are almost universally regarded as spurious) are in the Jewish historian Josephus. In the immense Latin literature of the century after the death of Jesus there are only eight lines; and each of these is disputed.

Certainly a disturbing silence from the Christian point of view. We might argue that, since the Jews were very hostile to the Christians, their great writers, Philo and Josephus, would be not unnaturally reluctant to speak about them. We might suggest that the teaching and crucifixion of Jesus, more than a thousand miles away from Rome, in a very despised province, would not be likely to come even to the notice of a Roman writer. Yet how strange, how ironic, that God should have lived on earth, for the salvation of men, during thirty years, and consummated a great sacrifice which dwarfs every other event in human history, and the stream of literature can flow on for a hundred years without more than half a dozen disputed lines on these transcendent miracles!

We are trying to take a common sense view of religious problems, using whatever aid we can get from modern science and modern history. Now from that point of view there does not seem to be much importance in this discussion of the non-Christian references to Christ. We have to deal with them because the theme of this chapter is the historicity of Christ, and we have to ask whether, since there are no Christian witnesses except the late and anony-

mous Gospels and the Epistles of Paul, there are any Jewish or pagan witnesses. But for the reasons I have just given I should not be greatly astonished if there were none at all. What was Jesus, or the Jesus cult, to the Greeks and Romans of the first century? One Asiatic superstition amongst many. They would hardly hear of it. It was only when Christianity became an organized religion, giving trouble to the imperial authorities, that they could be expected to notice it.

The argument is less strong as regards the Jewish writers. The more learned of these, Philo, who was born about the same time as Jesus, could scarcely be expected to mention Jesus and his followers. He was an Alexandrian Jew, and he wrote mainly on philosophy. An aristocrat of great wealth and culture, he would, even if he heard during his visit to Jerusalem of the new sect, not have any reason to speak of it in his works. His silence can mean no more than that Christianity was not of much importance in the world of his time.

It is very different with the historian Flavius Josephus. He was a Palestinian Jew, born at Jerusalem in 37 A. D., a man of high connections and great culture. He was intensely interested in religious questions, and he gives in one of his works so detailed an account of the Essenian monks, with whom I shall suggest that Jesus was connected, that many suspect that he may for a time have lived in one of their monasteries. After the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A. D.) he resided in Rome and wrote his works, the chief of which are his "History of the Jewish War" and "Jewish Antiquities." In one or other of these lengthy and exhaustive works he would, though a Pharisee, reasonably be expected to speak of Jesus and his followers. He even includes, in his "Jewish Antiquities," a full and unflattering portrait of Pontius Pilate; and he tells of other zealots and reformers than Jesus in the Jewish history of the time.

Now in the "Jewish Antiquities," as we have the book, we read the following passage (xviii, 3):

> About this time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed he should be called man. He wrought miracles, and was a teacher of those who gladly accept the truth, and had a large following among the Jews and pagans. He was the Christ. Although Pilate, at the complaint of the leaders of our people, condemned him to die on the cross, his earlier followers were faithful to him. For he appeared to them alive again on the third day, as god-sent prophets had foretold this and a thousand other wonderful things of him. The people of the Christians, which is called after him, survives until the present day.

This passage is so obviously spurious that it is astonishing to find a single theologian left in our time who accepts it. No competent theologian or historian does. Josephus was a zealous Jew: and most of this is rank blasphemy from the Jewish point of view.

There is a hint that Jesus was divine: he is said to have taught the truth, to have wrought miracles, and to have risen from the dead; and the messianic prophecies are expressly referred to him. To imagine Josephus writing such things is preposterous. It is a Christian interpolation.

But was a real reference to Jesus cut out by the Christian interpolator and replaced by this clumsy forgery? I have always held that that is probable, though some claim that the text of Josephus does not favor my idea. The passage about Jesus breaks in rather abruptly. Yet, clumsy as the forger was—making a zealous Jew recognize Jesus as "the Christ [Anointed One]" and the Messiah at the very height of the bitter feud of Jews and Christians—he would hardly pick any random page of the historian for his purpose. It seems to me not unlikely that he found there a reference to Jesus, and it would not be surprising if the last sentence of the passage, which would be just as clumsy for a later Christian to write, really is from the pen of Josephus.

We are told that an ancient Slavonic version of Josephus' "Jewish War" (not the "Antiquities") has been discovered, and that it contains testimony to the historicity of Christ. This may be one of two things. It may be a Christian interpolation in the "Jewish War" corresponding to the interpolation in the "Antiquities": or it may be a genuine Josephus reference to Jesus in sober terms. The former supposition is by far the more probable, since no later Christian would venture to cut out a reference to Jesus from our Greek version of Josephus (unless it was uncomplimentary).

The next most important reference to Jesus is in the "Annals" of the great Roman historian Tacitus (xv, 44). He mentions the fire which burned down the poorer quarters of Rome in the year 64 A. D. It was suspected that Nero had ordered the fire, which caused great misery at the time, and, Tacitus says, the Emperor diverted suspicion by blaming the Christians for it and persecuting them. I will translate the entire passage from the Latin:

> In order to put an end to this rumor, therefore, Nero laid the blame on, and visited with severe punishment, those men, hateful for their crimes, whom the people call Christians. He, from whom the name was derived, Christus, was put to death by the Procurator Pontius Pilatus in the reign of Tiberius.

Tacitus goes on to describe how "an immense multitude" of Christians were put to death with fiendish torments, and were convicted "not so much of the crime of arson as of hatred of the human race."

This passage has many peculiar features. There cannot possibly have been "an immense multitude" of Christians at Rome in 64 A. D. There were not more than a few thousand two hundred years later. It sounds like a Christian interpolation. On the other hand, Tacitus has one of the most distinctive and difficult styles

in Latin literature, and, if this whole passage is a forgery, it is a perfect imitation. We must, however, not press that argument too far. It is only the few words about the crucifixion that matter, and a good Latin scholar could easily achieve that. Professor Drews, indeed, who has a long and learned dissertation on the passage, believes it to be a forgery in its entirety, and argues that there was no persecution of Christians under Nero. He is not convincing, and it is difficult to believe—although there have been other scholars who agreed with Drews—that the passage generally was not written by Tacitus. The short sentence about Pilate may be an interpolation, but I know the peculiarities of the style of Tacitus too well to think the whole passage forged.

But why spend time over the matter? Tacitus is supposed to have written this about the year 117 A. D., or nearly eighty years after the death of Jesus. What does it prove? Only that after the year 100 there was a general belief in the Christian community that Jesus was crucified at the order of Pontius Pilate. That is nothing new. The reference to Pilate in I Timothy, whether Pauline or not, must be as old as that. Three of the Gospels were then written.

Some Christian writers argue that Tacitus must have seen the official record of the crucifixion. It is neither likely that any such official report would be sent to Rome nor that Tacitus looked up the archives, seventy years later, for such a thing. He was not the man to make such research or to be interested in such a point. If the passage is genuine, it shows only that there were in 117 A. D. Christians in Rome who said these things—which nobody doubts; and it is not certainly genuine.

I am inclined to accept it because another Roman historian of about the same date, Suetonius, has an obscure passage, in his "Life of Claudius" (Chap. xxvi), which seems to refer to the Christians: "Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome because, at the instigation of Chrestos, they were always making trouble." Chrestos was a not uncommon Greek name, and it is urged that it may have nothing to do with Christ. Claudius died in the year 54 A. D., and it is almost impossible to imagine that there was sufficient sectarian fighting between Jews and Christians at Rome over Christ—that is the only sense we can give to the sentence—before the year 54. On the other hand, the sentence would be quite meaningless as a Christian interpolation.

On the whole, since it would be too remarkable a coincidence to find the Jews rioting about a Greek named Chrestos when they were actually rioting about Christ, I prefer to think that Suetonius has heard, and has written in a confused way, about the Jewish reformer Christ. But it is of even less value than Tacitus. By the year 120 or 130 the cult of Christ was spread over the Roman world, and that is all that the mention by Suetonius implies.

Of Dr. Burch's twenty lines there remain only five in a letter of Pliny the younger to the Emperor Trajan. They say that the Christians were numerous enough in the province of Bithynia (Asia Minor), of which Pliny was Governor, to cause him concern. But he speaks of them as respectable, law-abiding folk who meet to sing hymns at day-break to Christ "as a God." A number of scholars have disputed the authenticity of the passage or the whole letter; and it hardly seems plausible that a Proconsul should write to the Emperor about such a matter. We need not, however, go into this. It follows only that by 113 there were a good many Christians in Asia Minor. Apologists merely reveal the desperate poverty of their case when they quote such things as these Latin sentences to prove that Jesus really lived nearly a century before.

We may conclude that no non-Christian writer of the first century mentions Christ—Josephus being equivocal and certainly actually adulterated—and references in the second century are of no value at all. I repeat, however, that this need not impress us much. Josephus is the only writer who could reasonably be expected to mention Christ, and we do not know whether or not he did. The Christians remained a very obscure sect in a world that was seething with sects. That is all we can infer; and we knew it.

A BROAD VIEW

It is a commonplace of religious literature that, if the Jesus of the Gospels did not exist, the creation of his personality by some obscure writers of the first century must itself be considered a miracle. Jesus is said to be "the grandest figure in all literature," and so on. The more the Modernist feels compelled to sacrifice the miracles and divinity of Jesus, the more zealous he is to magnify the grandeur of his personality.

Let us try, on the sober common-sense lines which we are following, to form an impartial opinion on this "figure of Jesus." Many Rationalist writers have used language about him just as superlative as that of the liberal theologians. Renan thought that there was "something divine" about Jesus. J. S. Mill was little less complimentary. Even Conybeare uses very high language. On the other hand, G. B. Shaw (in the preface to "Androcles") bluntly says that Jesus was insane. George Moore (in the preface to his "Apostle"—one of the most refreshing impressions of the Gospels that you could read) says that the figure of Christ in Luke, to which the preachers generally turn, is "a lifeless, waxen figure, daintily curled, with tinted cheeks, uttering pretty commonplaces gathered from 'The Treasury of the Lowly' as he goes by." A collection of the sayings about Jesus by able writers would beautifully illustrate the truth that on such subjects scarcely anybody tells the truth.

I have not the least interest in belittling the figure of Jesus. A

liberal parson once genially asked me to "take off my hat to the universe." I replied that I was not a fool; but that I would not mind raising my hat to the figure of Christ on the cross—or of Bruno at the stake or Socrates in prison. But, mind you, these others met death more serenely than Jesus did: I mean, if we are to take Jesus as he is described in the Gospels. No amount of theological ingenuity will explain that "sweat of blood" in the garden of Gethsemane; and, if you point to the "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," I point to the other words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

If you recall how Jesus loved little children, I remind you how by his advocacy of virginity as the higher ideal he cut at the root of family life and blighted love, and how he believed in eternal torment for people of weak will. If you bring up the gentleness to the adulterous woman, I remind you of the bitter and rather vulgar abuse of the Pharisees, to which you will find no parallel in any pagan moralist of the time. In the Gospels Jesus utters hardly a single sentiment which, apart from chastity, he does not violate. He even scorns synagogues and meeting-places, and then founds a Church. He has not one word of guidance in the great problems of social life because he believes that the world is coming to an end. He is the archetype of the Puritans: scornful of all that is fair in life, bitter and unjust to those who differ from him, quite impracticable—nay foolish—in many of his counsels. It is absurd to say that our modern world has any use for Christ.

Now, the plain solution of all this tissue of contradictions, this mixture of sentiments of humanity with fierce intolerance, this gentleness to women and children and scorn of love and comfort, is quite easy after what we have seen: a dozen different conceptions of Jesus have been blended—or, not blended, mixed together—in these composite writings which we call the Gospels. Theologians have for ages perspired in attempting to reconcile the two different genealogies and other contradictions. It is a waste of time. One man did not write any Gospel. One spirit did not dictate them. They embody the contradictory opinions of the isolated and often hostile communities in different parts of the Greco-Roman world. There is no "figure of Jesus" in the Gospels. There are a dozen figures. It was not the same man who made Jesus love children and scorn his mother. It was not the same man who made Jesus turn water into wine for marriage roisterers (probably singing what we now call indecent songs) and then advise us to live on bread and sleep on stones: who made Jesus the warm friend of the painted lady of Magdala and the advocate of barren isolation from all that is human. Jesus of Nazareth became in time the Jesus of Tarsus, of Ephesus, of Corinth, of Antioch, of Alexandria, and so on. The figure of the pale enthusiast was shaped and colored differently in a score of different environments. Paul's letters picture them for us.

To one group he has to talk much about fornication and feasting, to another about correct ritual, to another about points of theology, and so on.

Must we, then, despair of finding any human Jesus at all, and suppose that he is a myth who became man in the imaginations of his followers?

There are some very potent reasons why I cannot agree with my learned friends in this. Let it be understood that there is no reason for bias either way. No Rationalist could in our time—whatever might be said of Matthew Arnold or Renan or Mill—be tempted to think that favoring the historicity of Jesus lessened the odium of his position. Most people now do not care a cent what you think about Jesus.

It seems probable that the phenomena of a Christianity in the first century imply an historical personage. I have not made a special study of the point, but from a general knowledge of Hindu and Chinese sacred literature I should say that we have less evidence of the personal existence of Kong-fu-tse or Buddha than of Jesus. The documents are even further removed from the events than the Epistles and Gospels are. Yet no historian doubts their historicity. Dr. Couchoud tells of a learned Buddhist priest who seems to have wondered how far Buddha was historical. But it is not clear from his five or six words to Dr. Couchoud that he meant more than that actual details of Buddha's life were unreliable, as in the case of Jesus.

Broad views are often the best views. We have a large number of historical and literary events to explain. Beyond any question there were great numbers of Christian churches in existence before the end of the first century. Probably Peter was never at Rome, but the other Roman bishops named, from about 70 A. D. onward, are not doubted. This group was a thousand miles from Judea; and there were churches all the way between, with overseers (bishops), elders (priests), and servers (deacons). Lives of Jesus were circulating amongst them, and, with all respect to Professor Smith, those lives or Gospels do unquestionably represent Jesus as a man, living in Judea. The Church made short work of the Gnostics who held that Jesus was never contaminated by a bodily frame. Basilides, one of the ablest of the Gnostics, an Alexandrian, tried to teach in the first half of the second century that Jesus was never a man; and the whole Church promptly and emphatically repudiated him. He had to found a special half-Persian, half-Christian sect.

The Epistles of Paul take us back to about the middle of the first century. There are then groups of Christians in every large city. They have no bishops or priests in the modern sense, but there are "elders" (Timothy, Titus, etc.), and there are some sort of higher men who appoint them and consider complaints about their

conduct. It is clear that this situation existed certainly by 60 A. D. Paul was closer in touch with them all than any other man was. I am not relying on Acts, though part of it may be fairly early, but on the generally accepted Epistles. And Paul's gospel, which in these respects he does not find challenged anywhere, is quite clear. His belief in the physical resurrection of Jesus is, he admits, not accepted by all. That belief is on a different plane. One could easily be mistaken about it. But that Jesus was born, taught, and was executed in Judea is at the very basis of Paul's teaching; and he never mentions any member of a church who doubts it. The Gnostics with their spiritual Jesus came later.

Moreover, Paul, as we saw, habitually speaks of Cephas and others who were actual companions of Jesus. We have to deny the genuineness of all the Epistles to doubt this. In II Corinthians (iv, 10) Paul says that it is fourteen years since he first came to believe in Jesus: that is to say, to believe that he was God, not that he was man. So he joined the Christian body, and mingled with them in Jerusalem, within less than ten years of the execution of Jesus. No Jew there seems to have told him that Jesus was a mere myth. In all the bitter strife of Jew and Christian the idea seems to have occurred to nobody. Setting aside the Gospels entirely, ignoring all that Latin writers are supposed to have said in the second century, we have a large and roughly organized body of Christians at a time when men were still alive who remembered events of the fourth decade of the century.

I conclude only that it is more reasonable to believe in the historicity of Jesus. There is no parallel in history to the sudden growth of a myth and its conversion into a human personage in one generation. Moreover, to these early Christians Jesus is not primarily a teacher. A collection of wise teachings might in time get a mythical name attached to it—though why the name "Jesus" it is hard to see—and the myth might in further time become a real person. But from the earliest moment that we catch sight of Christians in history the essence of their belief is that Jesus was an incarnation, in Judea, of the great God of the universe. The supreme emphasis is on the fact that he assumed a human form and shed human blood on a cross. So it seems to me far more reasonable, far more scientific, far more consonant with the facts of religious history which we know, to conclude that Jesus was a man who was gradually turned into a God.

CHAPTER XIII

The Sources of Christian Morality

Is There a Christian Morality?—The Stolen Parables—The Sermon on the Mount—Golden Rules—Futility of the Christian Ethic

Is There a Christian Morality?

IN two places in my travels I have encountered a primitive marriage custom. In a certain district of rural Mexico the nervous bride must produce her bed-sheets, for the inspection of neighbors, on the morning after her wedding. If they show not palpable proof that she had been a virgin until the previous evening, the village frowns upon her. Friends take back their wedding gifts. The husband fumes and sulks. And far away, at the other side of the globe, in rural Bulgaria, I found much the same custom; except that there was no punishment, and the bride produced her stained sheet in a general atmosphere of robust hilarity.

Mexico and Bulgaria: two regions as free from the taint of the modern spirit as from the smut of our factories and the deadly rush of our automobiles. There the cheap figure or picture of Christ and his mother rules the home as it has done in the one case for centuries and in the other for more than a millennium. It is not known there that there are Atheists in the world. All the problems of life are reduced to one: how to wrest a few more cents per week out of the beautiful soil with the implements of a Polynesian farmer. . . . And so, while Boston or Philadelphia has grown so sensitive that the mention of bed at a wedding breakfast would be deemed an unpardonable outrage, and its preachers blush to recall—as they love to do—the licentious *hymenalia* of a pagan wedding, really Christian parts of the world still salute marriage with a candor that belongs to the infancy of the race.

You may think I have selected two rare instances. No, they are casual experiences of travel, but I will give two others, from equally uncontaminated districts of southern Europe. In the one, a metropolis, unnatural vice is so prevalent that maids are generally virtuous. In the other, a large and beautiful region, both natural and unnatural vice are as lightly held as they have ever been in any history.

This is the moral paradox of our age. In these regions of southern Europe and America the world lives as it has lived for

the last fifteen centuries. The faith is as primitive as the plow; and blushes are as rare as doubts. I have seen the Bulgar at Mass on a feast-day, his dull bovine eyes for once lit with awe; and I have seen him intoxicated and entirely unrestrained a few hours later. That was the universal world of our ancestors during the long centuries of the Christian dominion; and now we are asked to believe that Christian morality is the only influence that can preserve in the world a becoming delicacy of sentiment and expression in regard to sex.

In one of the rooms of the Vatican Palace I saw an exquisite fresco of Alexander VI kneeling, in rapt adoration, before the Lord, and not far away was a beautiful painting of the Virgin, to whom he was profoundly devoted. They were painted by Pinturecchio: the wicked, cynical little Pinturecchio. And the model who sat to him for the Virgin was the golden-haired young girl, Giulia Farnese, the pope's darling. And I wondered, as I looked, if it was in this very room that, as old John Buchara, the Master of Ceremonies, tells us in his private Diary, Alexander sat one night with Giulia and his daughter, while Cesare Borgia provided one of his exotic entertainments: and fifty of the loveliest prostitutes of the Holy City danced naked before them, stooping in every posture to pick up chestnuts from the floor as their lithe forms shone in the light of the candles.

Oh, Rome, you say: the Scarlet Woman. But Rupert Hughes has shown, in a series of well-documented articles in the "Haldeman-Julius Monthly" (1925), that sex was almost as rampant in the supposedly most puritanical of the Puritan periods of America; and the historian Buckle has shown Calvinistic Scotland had nameless vices: and . . . .

Well, you say, the law is there. These were not Christian morals, but the most flagrant violation of Christian teaching. Yes, but let us consider the matter plainly. In those ages of faith, in those parts of the world where faith still lingers at its purest, there was, and is, no delicacy about sex; yet men believe without the thinnest shade of doubt in the moral authority of Christ. He is God, the stern judge of the living and the dead; just as surely to Pope Alexander VI and the Puritan wantons as he is to the men and maids I saw in Mexico and Italy, Greece and Bulgaria.

Now he is a fading ghost of history. Scholars—theological scholars—have taken from him one by one those terrible insignia of power and authority which gave to his words a note of stern command. Historians have dissolved away his human personality until there remains only an elusive suggestion of a reformer who was put to death on a cross, as very many were, in Judea some nineteen centuries ago. Your Christ of divine authority, of shuddering penalties for sin, failed to rule the hearts of men. Now, you

think, in an age of fearless questioning, of loud assertion of the right to live, of impatience of rule, your pale ghost of a Jesus is likely to check the strongest impulses of the race.

But sex-morality, you say, is only a small part of the Christian code. There are justice, temperance, truthfulness, love of one's neighbor, honesty. Quite true. I had merely thought that you considered Christianity peculiarly effective in checking the sex-impulses of men and women, and so I ventured to recall how frankly and unrestrainedly sexual people were and are, where they believed, or believe, most confidently in the authoritative character and dire penalties of the Christian ethic. Our generation is at least not more sexual than any other, but it has one distinguishing feature: it has very seriously raised the question whether moral law in regard to sex does not contain spurious elements. If your ethic was ineffective when none dared raise such a question, how will it work now?

But let us take the code of Christian morality in its entirety; and let us agree that an ethic is a vital need of the world. Moral law is social law, and social law becomes the more imperative in proportion as society becomes more complex and better organized. The word "virtue" is the Roman word for "manliness." The Greek word meant "excellence"; but the Greeks conceived it in an intellectual sense, and it really meant "wisdom." To us the word is coming to mean, more and more, "common sense." It will one day be automatic.

Society today is, from the moral point of view, in the disorganized condition in which western America was, let us say, half a century ago. Men have gone out from the shadow of the old law and its penalties. They laugh at hell and they patronize God. For untrained minds the result would be disastrous if the human meaning of morality were not so frequently and dramatically expressed. "If there is no God, why can't I do what I like?" is a question I have had to answer for thirty years. But the answer is easy. Next morning, perhaps, the maid reads of one like herself who has been lured to a sea-side bungalow, where fragments of her burned body are later discovered, or another who has gone for a glorious week-end and left her fair young frame in some deserted wood. There is law because there are penalties: not penalties because there is a law.

This is the world which you would bring back to Christian morality. Now let us dismiss the question of sanctions and regard the code in itself. You are going to offer our world the ethic of Christ without the fire that is never quenched and the worm which dieth not. You lay the emphasis on *Christian* morality: the sublimest code that was ever given to men, the pattern of life set by the noblest character—and so on.

Candidly, how much do you know about Epictetus or Apollonius? How much, in the way of precise detail, do you know

about Kong-fu-tse, Lao-tse, Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Zeno, Epicurus, Dion Chrysostom, Seneca, or Spinoza? The list might fill a good half-page. You are positive that Christ was far nobler than all these; and you will probably admit that you have never heard of some of them and have not read more than a few disparaging Christian remarks about any of them. How does the very little which we can even pretend to know about Jesus make him superior to these?

The ideal, at all events, is magnificent, you say. I suggest that you are again repeating an oft-repeated phrase; and I ask you to try this simple experiment. Take the Gospel of Luke, in which the figure of Christ is said to appear in its most alluring charm and most shining nobility, and run over it.

Let us ignore Christ's words for a moment, and see how he acted. Nothing in the first three chapters. In Chapter iv he preaches, and he works two miracles. Nothing out of the ordinary for a preacher (except miracles). Nothing at all either sublime or winsome in Chapters v, vi, and vii except that he allows a prostitute to kiss his feet (which no respectable preacher would dare to do). In the next chapter other loose women minister to him; and he snubs his mother. In Chapter ix he declines to ask God to burn—as his chosen disciples want—a village and all its inhabitants because they refuse him free hospitality: which sounds rather elementary. In the next chapter he undoes even this by saying that cities which do not receive his disciples shall be treated worse than Sodom; and in the next three chapters he does nothing of any note except abuse the Pharisees (four-fifths of the nation) in fine style. That is more than half the "most beautiful" of the Gospels.

In short, any man who will reflect on what he has been saying all his life, and will trouble to take an hour or two to verify it, will find that in Luke, which is supposed to depict Jesus at his best, there is no figure of Jesus at all corresponding to the pulpit-rhetoric about him. If he was divine, we do not count the miracles and the casting out of devils. *Our* age would ask him what the devils were doing there at all. The glorification of Christ is really based upon his words, his moral teaching. If you omit the "sayings of Jesus" from Luke, there remains only the rather unsympathetic figure of a zealot who calls his opponents "fools" and "hypocrites" and "vipers," who predicts horrible calamities for cities which do not accept his teaching, who is gentle with sinners and harsh with his mother, who says that he has expressly come to split up families, and so on.

We turn, then, away from this "luminous model," which does not exist (and would not be a model if it did, for Jesus is supposed to have had supernatural gifts), and consider the sayings. Now if, as I said, the religious reader will rid himself for an hour

of the hypnotic influence of the pulpit, he will begin to wonder how it is that the most casual remarks of Jesus could be given verbatim by Luke at least forty years later.

The record is really remarkable. Mary (Chapter i) seems to have composed, impromptu, a very creditable piece of poetry and at once written it down to give to posterity. The short remarks of devils, invalids, apostles, soldiers, etc., are all at hand for reproduction fifty years later. The longest speeches of Jesus are available. All this in an age when, although the enlightened Romans had a system of shorthand, the Jews certainly hadn't. We may take it as certain that Mary, Peter, Matthew, etc., could not read or write. The believer now treasures every word in the Gospels. How, on reflection, does he suppose that they were kept for posterity?

But, you say, how could any man forget them?

They are so sublime, so original, so unique, so superhuman. And just there I join issue. They are neither sublime, nor unique, nor original, nor superhuman; for every one of them had been said already, and it was possible for any educated Jew or Greek to make a collection or compilation of them.

THE STOLEN PARABLES

The first original feature which will be claimed for the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels is the use of parables. Here, it will be said, he differed essentially from the Scribes and Pharisees. They spent their time splitting hairs. They argued endlessly with each other about points of law and doctrine. They paid no heed to the "great multitudes" which hungered for the word of life; and it was to these that Jesus spoke, in simple moral stories which all could understand.

This idea is, as I have already said, based upon a misconception of the Pharisees: an idea of them as a comparatively small and isolated sect, which shows that the Gospel-writer had never lived in Judea. Historians tell us that the bulk of the Jews—variously estimated at three-fourths to four-fifths of the nation, were Pharisees. Paul, a working man, was a Pharisee. A Pharisee, was, in the time of Jesus, simply a good Jew who was zealous for the law. It was mainly the Pharisees who addressed the people in the synagogues; and they sometimes permitted Jesus to address them.

It is still stranger, and shows more plainly than ever that the men who wrote the Gospels were far removed, both in space and time, from the Judea of 30 A. D., that the parable was a very ordinary and esteemed method of teaching in the land. The parable is a very natural outcome of the mind of primitive races, in whom imagination is not yet overshadowed by intellect. It is the art of the Oriental just as sculpture and architecture are the arts of other

nations in an early phase of development. In point of fact, the parables which are ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels were stolen by the writers from the Rabbis whom they attacked.

There is a great deal of quibbling, of partial statement or partisan misstatement of the truth, in these matters, and I want the readers to take a broad-minded view. As I shall show in a moment, most of the parables of the Gospel are actually in the Talmud, the semi-sacred book of the Jews. Any person can verify that; although, curiously enough, for it is a point of the greatest interest, the fact was mentioned only in a few obscure Jewish works until I drew general attention to it in my "Sources of the Morality of the Gospels."

Now, it is entirely certain that a dozen identical parables, with the same moral and almost exactly the same language, were not invented separately in the same age and country, by Jesus and the Rabbis. That is elementary common sense; and, even if some desperate person maintained that they could be thus thought out independently, it would still follow that Jesus merely did what the Rabbis did. The only point for a serious student is: Which borrowed from the other?

At the time that the Gospels, as we have them, were written—the end of the first and beginning of the second century—there was, as is well known, a very bitter feud between Jews and Christians. It is that conflict which tinges the reference to the Pharisees in the New Testament. Were the Rabbis, in such circumstances, likely to steal the sayings of Jesus? One can imagine the derision with which the Christians would treat such an audacious theft. No early Christian writer accuses the Jews of it.

But, you may say, this cuts both ways. Would the Christians be likely to steal from the Jews? Does any writer of the time accuse them of stealing the parables?

It sounds plausible until you learn that there were no Rabbinical writers of the time. You see the force of it. There were Christian writers (of Gospels, Epistles, apologetic treatises, and so on), and they could say what they liked of the Rabbis and, as by that time there was a sharp cleavage and few Christians knew what the Rabbis had said, they could safely borrow Rabbinical sayings. When you study these matters, you must get entirely away from the atmosphere of the twentieth century. I am not suggesting that, say, the writer of Luke sat down one day, with a fountain pen, to compile a collection of nice things to ascribe to Jesus. It must not be supposed that he had before him, as I have at the moment, a lot of books from which he could select his material. He had no books at all (unless he had copies of the Greek moralists), for the sayings and parables of the Rabbis were not in writing. All the material of the Gospels was oral. Stories and sayings went from mouth to mouth for half a century.

The origin of them may have been quite unknown to the Greek writer of Luke.

Here an orthodox reader may fancy that he can see a serious flaw in the argument. If the sayings and parables of the Rabbis were not committed to parchment by the beginning of the second century, how is any person going to prove that they existed at all?

We must glance at the origin of the Talmud. Rodkinson reminds us in his "History of the Talmud" how, since the canon of the Jewish sacred books was closed in the fifth century B. C., teachers confined themselves to commentaries on "the Law and the Prophets"; and they were so zealous in preserving the canon that they wrote nothing. There were very important schools, in Babylonia and Egypt as well as Judea, and from about the time of Christ the ordained teachers were known as Rabbis. There were two very famous Rabbis in the time of Christ: a rigorist named Shamai and a liberal and humanitarian named Hillel, who was far more like the Jesus of the Gospels (without the occasional harshness) than like the Pharisees of the Gospels. But all teaching and tradition were oral. Except that some of the Rabbis used notes, it was strictly forbidden to commit the teaching to parchment.

But consider carefully the difference between the Jewish oral tradition and the Christian. The Jewish tradition was handed down in *schools,* with a strict educational discipline. The pupils, who came from all parts of the world, and went from school to school to compare notes, learned by heart, as a pupil now learns poetry, the words of the more famous Rabbis. Exactness was just as important as in any other school. It was precisely the opposite with the Christian tradition. The atmosphere of the religious circle was as far removed as possible from that of the school, and there was only the loosest communication between one center and another.

After the dispersion of the Jews, however, it was felt that a systematic record was required, and the famous Rabbi Akiba began the work in the time of Hadrian: almost at the time when the Gospels, as we have them, were completed. This body of teaching was, for the Palestinian Jews, committed to writing in the fourth century; but scholars can easily distinguish between the older part, closed in the second century (called the Mishna), and the later additions, or Gemara. In the Mishna, the oldest part of the Talmud, we have the sayings of Rabbis from the time of Christ onward.

A learned theologian, Dr. Julicher, has suggested that it was the example of Christ which set the Rabbis using parables. Apart from the fact that, as St. Jerome, who lived in Palestine, tells us, "it was a common thing for the Syrians to add parables to their words," Dr. Julicher really evades the point. It is that the para-

bles ascribed to the Rabbis in the Mishna are largely *the same parables* as those ascribed to Christ. I do not know of any writer who suggests that the Rabbis actually borrowed their parables from the despised and obscure little sect of the Christians in the first century! In any case, Rabbi Ziegler has shown that, as any Bible reader may remember, the parable begins in the Old Testament ("Die Königs-Gleichnisse des Midrasch"). Where "three thousand proverbs" are attributed to Solomon (I Kings iv, 32), the word in the Hebrew text is really "parables." The "parable of the vineyard," for instance (Mark xii, 1-9), is obviously based upon Isaiah v, 1-6.

A comparison of the Gospel and the Talmudic parables, with a learned commentary, was published in 1912 by P. Fiebig ("Die Gleichnisreden Jesu"), and I need only translate a few illustrations from this or from Rodkinson's "History of the Talmud."

First let us take a parable of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai, who was teaching in Jerusalem before the year 70 A. D. Warning his pupils to be ever ready for death, he says:

> Like unto a king who invited his servants to a banquet but appointed no time unto them. The wise among them put on their festive garments, and betook themselves to the door of the king's house, saying: In a king's house nothing is wanting [that is to say, the banquet may be ready today]. But the foolish among them went about their work, saying: Can a banquet be prepared without trouble? And of a sudden the king summoned his servants. The wiser went in unto him, as they were, in their festive garments; and the foolish went in unto him, as they were, in their soiled garments. Then the king was pleased with the wise, but angry with the foolish. He said: They who have dressed themselves for the banquet may sit, and eat, and drink; but they who have not put on festive garments shall stand by and watch.

With this compare the parable in Matthew xxii, 2.

> The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying: Tell them which are bidden. Behold I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants: The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment; and he saith unto him: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants: Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Frankly, this is silly. Never in history did men refuse a royal invitation and slay the messengers. And then there is the feast waiting (cattle killed, etc.) while armies go and burn down the cities which are mysteriously possessed by the guests, and so on. Sillier still, and far from moral, is the idea that because a man who has been brought in off the highway does not happen to be wearing his finest clothes he must be fearfully punished. It is a phantasmagoria of folly; and I am only astonished that those who believe in the divinity of Christ did not long ago denounce it as a Jewish interpolation. The sober part of it is obviously borrowed from Johanan. "The kingdom of heaven" is, in Christ's language, the day of death and judgment, so the main idea is the same. But the parable went round and round among ignorant people until in the end it reads like a nightmare. We have no reason to believe that it appeared in Matthew until the last decade of the century.

The "parable of the ten virgins" looks as if it might have been inspired by the same Jewish parable; and it is equally far from being an improvement on the original. The bridegroom who turns up at midnight, the maids who placidly sleep while the bridegroom is missing, the refusal of bridesmaids on such an occasion to give a little oil, the brutal conduct of the groom—it is another phantasmagoria of nonsense (Matthew xxv, 1-13). These things are taught to the children in British schools as examples of the superlative wisdom and tenderness of Jesus. There are several parables in the older part of the Talmud which play round the same idea, but, absurd as much of the Talmud is, they are more sober than these two Gospel parables.

Let us take "the parable of the talents." It is told in Matthew (xxv, 14-28) and Luke (xix, 12-27); and it is told with such material variations that it is clear there was no written record of the supposed words of Jesus. In Luke it has the usual childish details; a "nobleman" goes into a far country to take over a "kingdom," and so on. It is much the way in which little girls tell each other stories. In both, however, the main idea is that God has entrusted man with money to invest, and the original parable may be one spoken by the Rabbi Elazar ben Arach. His master, the Rabbi Johanan, had lost a son, and Elazar said to him, by way of consolation:

> I will tell thee a parable. To whom shall I liken the matter? To a man with whom the king hath entrusted a deposit. Every day he wept, and cried, and said: Woe is me, when shall I be free from this burden and in peace? So thou, rabbi, hadst a son . . . and he left the world sinless. Thou mayst therefore be comforted; for thou hast restored thy trust uninjured.

Rabbi Elazar belongs to the end of the first and beginning of the second century. In my "Sources of the Morality of the

Gospels" I wrongly supposed that he was too late to influence the Gospels. The fact is that Rabbi Johanan died about 90 A. D., and his loss of a son must have been some years before that date.

The closely related "parable of the debtors" (Matthew xviii, 23-34) seems equally to come from a Jewish source, and is far inferior to the original. The Evangelist makes a servant owe a king "ten thousand talents"; which is, in modern money, about ten million dollars, or enough to buy up all Jerusalem! Moreover, the man promises to pay all the debt, and the king, who at first condemns him and his wife and children to slavery, suddenly wipes out the whole enormous debt. The original seems to be a sober story which is used thus by the Rabbi Jose:

> I will make thee a parable. To what shall I liken the matter? To a man who lendeth his neighbor a mina [about $20], and appointeth unto him a day of reckoning in the presence of the king. And he swore to him on the life of the king. The time came, but he paid not; and he came to make his peace with the king. And the king said unto him: Thy offense against me is forgiven: go thou and make peace with thy neighbor.

Even here there are little eccentricities, such as taking a man before the king to pay twenty dollars, but the Rabbi's use of the story (which was probably common) is much preferable to Matthew's.

The belief in the wisdom of Jesus is so rooted that divines themselves are quite blind to the absurdities of the parables. In Spence and Exell's "Pulpit Commentary," which is much used by British preachers, not only is there no note of exclamation or interrogation at the sum of ten million dollars, but the commentator solemnly goes on (or advises the preacher to go on): "The reckoning had only just begun: there may have been other *even greater debts* to come!"

Fiebig is too ready to say that the Rabbinical parable is too late to have been copied into the Gospels. Both generally drew from a common stock, he thinks. But no evidence could be given that the parables were in any gospel before the year 100 A. D. at least, and those I have given are not later than that. The Talmud, however, continues to give parables substantially identical with those of the Gospels under the names of Rabbis of the second and third centuries, and, since it is quite impossible to suppose that Rabbis would venture to give in the schools as their own parables those which any pupil might read in the hated Christian book, it is most likely that the idea of the parable was an old one, often used, and the Talmud has preserved it in the form given to it by a particular late Rabbi.

There is, for instance, "the parable of the unjust steward" (Luke xvi, 1-10). It is, like most of the others, full of absurdities. The "lofty moralist" is represented as "commending the

unjust steward" and urging us to "make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." The comments of commentators on these things are amusing. More sober, again is the Talmud version, attributed to Rabbi Simon ben Elazar (of about 200 A. D.):

> Like to a king who had two supervisors: one set over the treasures of silver and gold, and one set over the stores of straw. The one who had charge of the straw store was suspected, and he murmured because they would not set him over the store of silver and gold. Then said they to him: Fool, if thou incurrest suspicion in regard to the straw store, how canst thou be found fit to take charge of the treasures of silver and gold?

Fiebig here observes that the Talmud parable has little in common with the version in Luke. The truth is that it has a point in common with it so material that we must conclude that both drew from the same source. The conclusion of Luke's amazing moral story is:

> He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much [great]; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

This moral has not only no connection whatever with Luke's version of the parable, but it is precisely the lesson of the parable as given by the Rabbi, who concludes:

> If the children of Noah were not faithful to the commandments given them, how much less would they have observed all the commandments of the law?

The "parable of the workers in the vineyard," one of the most popular, has a perfect parallel in the Talmud; and the Talmud version again avoids the perversities of the Christian version. In Matthew (xx, 1-16) the employer arbitrarily chooses to pay the same sum to those who had worked only one hour and to those who had "borne the burden and heat of the day"; and, when the latter complained, the employer harshly answers: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" I do not find that the preachers who have now discovered that the ethic of Jesus has a wonderful application to social questions ever use that text. In the Talmud it runs more reasonably:

> Rabbi Zeira said: To whom shall I liken the Rabbi Bon, son of Chija? To a king that hath hired many workers, and among them was one who *did more work than was needful*. What did the king do? He took him, and walked about with him. When evening was come, the laborers came to receive their hire, and he gave unto this one the same wage as unto the others. And the laborers murmured and said: We have worked the whole day, and this man hath worked but two hours, yet he hath given him the same wage together with us. Then the king said to them: *This man hath done more in two hours than ye have done during the whole day*. So Rabbi Bon did more in the Law in twenty-eight years than a clever pupil could learn in a hundred years.

Rabbi Zeira lived about the year 300 A. D., but in the Talmud the parable is in Hebrew (the later part of the Talmud being in Aramaic), which means that it is ancient. Apparently the Rabbi applied to his young colleague, who had recently died, an old parable of the schools, and Luke used the same. Quite certainly those two stories come from a common source; and it is just as certain that no distinguished Rabbi would borrow stories from the New Testament.

I have given in my "Sources of the Morality of the Gospels" a number of further parallels. There are clear parallels to the parable of Dives and Lazarus, of the lost coin, of the lost sheep, of the prodigal son, and others. The parable was the favorite expression of the Rabbis, from the time of Jesus onward, and every idea in the parables of the Gospels was used by them. In most cases they used the actual stories. The "originality" of Jesus is a myth. The "superb" language attributed to him is largely foolish.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Now let us take up the remaining parts of the moral teaching attributed to Jesus in the Gospels. We may begin with the Sermon on the Mount, which contains almost a complete summary of the morality of the Gospels.

The slightest reflection should suffice to make any open-minded reader skeptical about this famous Sermon. For centuries the most learned divines have brooded over it, and written commentaries and sermons on it, and, until recent years, not one of them ever expressed a doubt about its being a correct reproduction of a lengthy discourse by Jesus. Yet the circumstances at once excite suspicion, or more than suspicion.

It is not known to Mark, the oldest Gospel; and Luke, who makes it a Sermon on the Plain, obviously has no account of it in the least resembling that of Matthew. The setting of the story, moreover, in Matthew is not impressive. In order to preach a long sermon to "his disciples"—only four have been mentioned—he goes up "into a mountain" for some mysterious reason. Finally, the four Galilean fishermen who formed his audience must have been totally illiterate, and since no one could write the sermon, it must be supposed to have been miraculously memorized by them. We have here, in fact, one of the plainest cases in the Gospels of a late compilation attributed to Jesus. Matthew actually forgets (vii, 28) that Jesus has (v, 1) left the multitudes behind, and in the end he makes these the audience.

Modern divines recognize these weaknesses, and say that it is not a single discourse, but a collection of sayings of Jesus put in a dramatic form by the writer of the Gospels. This, they say, does not in the least detract from its value. The sentiments embodied in it are superb, unique, etc. Let us see.

It opens with the famous Eight Beatitudes, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and so on. I have noticed that much time is wasted by clericals and anti-clericals in conflicts over this supposed glorification of poverty. Divines with a pretension to a knowledge of Greek assure us that what Jesus really says is: "Blessed *be* the poor." That is nonsense, for the Greek text, which lies before me, contains no verb at all. In plain English, this first and much-quoted sentence of the great sermon is a piece of confusion. Consistently with other texts of the Gospels, and the tenets of the Essenians, it *ought* to be a frank glorification of poverty. But the writer expressly says "the poor in spirit," or poor-spirited; and the only plausible meaning we can give to it is "the humble in spirit." Our age does not want that counsel. It has done incalculable harm in the past. But, in any case, to say that there is anything original in a religious moralist commending humility is quite absurd. The later books of the Old Testament and the Talmud are full of such passages, and one could cull even from the pagan moralists a whole anthology of such sentiments. Even material poverty, if any insist that Jesus meant this, is glorified by them. Seneca wrote a treatise on it. Plutarch asks: "What disease shall we say that the rich man suffereth from but spiritual poverty?" ("On Covetousness," iv). Epictetus says: "Any person may live happy in poverty, but few in wealth and power" ("Fragments," cxxviii).

The next sentence is "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted": which is almost a quotation from Isaiah (lxi, 1-2, etc.), or from innumerable verses of the prophets and the psalms. Every moralist who believes in God makes a commonplace of the sentiment. So it is with the blessing of "the meek"—another disastrous counsel which Christianity impressed upon the world. The psalms and prophets are full of it, and every Stoic repeats it. Seneca says: "I will be meek and yielding to my enemies" ("On the Happy Life," xx, 5). Plutarch writes: "A calm and meek and humane temper is not more pleasant to those with whom we live than to him who possesseth it" ("On Restraining Anger," xvi).

Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius constantly say it. And I admire it no more in them than in Matthew; but anything less original than these "Eight Platitudes," as they ought to be called, it would be difficult to conceive. I have in my other work given many perfect parallels to each, and could have given scores. Each sentiment is a moral and religious commonplace, and the language is not a whit better in the Gospels than that of the psalms, the Rabbis, or the Stoic moralists.

After the Beatitudes the writer makes Jesus address his audience as "the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world," and so on. It is obviously meant to be an address to a few chosen

disciples; yet at the close, we are told, "the people were astonished at his doctrine." The whole passage is a clumsy late fabrication, for at that time, the very beginning of the career of Jesus, there was no question of any "persecution." And what would the four burly fishermen, who had just been recruited in Galilee, think of hearing that they were "the light of the world"? It was precisely the title which Jewish pupils gave to their most learned Rabbis.

Jesus is then said to have assured his hearers that he advocated no change whatever in "the Law": the most essential injunctions of which (sacrifice, etc.) he spent his career in denouncing. "Till heaven and earth shall pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled" (v, 18). Here Matthew puts into the mouth of Jesus the sentiment of the Judaizing Christians, and confirms it in the next verse with a stern threat; and in the very next verse he switches off to the sentiments of the anti-Judaizing Christians and begins to belabor the Pharisees—the model observers of the Law!

The writer does not even understand them. The old law was, he makes Jesus say, that you must not kill: the new law is that you shall not even be angry with your brother "without a cause." A few verses earlier the lesson was that you must not even be angry with your brother if you *have* a cause. Moreover, there is nothing in the least new about this "new and higher morality." The Pharisees of the second century must have smiled at it, because precisely the *old* law ran (Lev. xix, 18): "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart . . . . thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but *thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" And, as I have already said, the Rabbis quoted in the Talmud and the pagan moralists abound in the same sense.

Matthew makes Jesus follow up his counsel by saying that if you take a gift to the altar and recollect that you have a grudge against a man, you must "leave the gift before the altar" and go first and be reconciled. A pretty anachronism! There were no Christian altars to receive gifts until decades after the death of Jesus; and men did not take "gifts," but animals to be sacrificed (which Jesus denounced), to the Jewish altars.

He goes on to say that the old law was that you should not commit adultery: the new law makes it a sin even to desire a woman. But the oldest law precisely was: "Thou shalt not *covet* thy neighbor's wife," and the later books of the Old Testament say exactly what Jesus is supposed to say: "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart" (Prov. vi, 25), and "Gaze not on a maid . . . gaze not on another's beauty," (Ecclus. ix, 5 and 8). The Rabbis went even beyond Jesus. "Whosoever," says the Talmud, "regardeth even the little finger of a woman hath already sinned

in his heart" (Berachot, 24, 1). Seneca, Epictetus and all the Stoics are just as stern with us. "It is the intention, not the outward act, which makes the wickedness," says Seneca ("On the Happy Life," xvi). Our age is not likely to be moved by these exaggerated pruderies.

Then there is the "sublime principle," in a matter of vital human importance, about divorce. Mark and Luke make Jesus forbid divorce under any conditions. Matthew allows divorce for "fornication." The result is that the Churches are entirely at variance on one of the most important of social and moral problems. The Catholic thinks all divorce invalid; the British Protestant is sure that a woman commits no sin if she remarries after divorcing her husband for adultery; the German or American Protestant genially commits all three Evangelists (if not Jesus) to the flames and gets a divorce for half a dozen reasons. Verily, our age would be sadly perplexed if it had not these simple and sublime teachings of Jesus!

I may add that the Jews at the time of Jesus were just as divided as the primitive Christians evidently were, and Christians are today. Some Rabbis—unknown to Matthew—forbade divorce altogether; some allowed it for adultery; others admitted many grounds for divorce. And we are told that it is only from religion that we can get any clear and firm guidance on sex-questions.

Several verses on oaths follow; and the writer of the Gospel again makes a mistake in thinking that the Old Testament and the Pharisees did not forbid swearing. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" is one of the Ten Commandments; and more than one passage of the Old Testament says, like Ecclus. xxiii, 9-11, "Accustom not thy mouth to an oath." There were no civic or official oaths in Judea; but there is no Christian country that has not myriads of them. Until recently Christian civilizations prosecuted any man who acted on Christ's injunction and refused to take an oath. Less than a century ago men who sought justice in British courts of law were contemptuously dismissed because they had scruples about taking an oath. Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus condemned oaths just as Jesus did. Popes and bishops insist on them.

Next comes the famous counsel that, whereas the old law permitted one to demand "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," in the new and higher dispensation you must even turn the other cheek to the smiter and give the cloak also to the man who takes your coat.

Since Christendom is unanimously agreed, and always has been agreed, that no man of sense would act upon this "sublime teaching" of Jesus, we need hardly linger over it. But it is necessary to point out once more that it is certainly not Jesus—not a Jew of the year 30 A. D. who said this. For, although the "eye for

an eye" principle is found in Exodus, where it seems to be a fragment of earlier tribal customs, the later books of the Old Testament say, over and over again, precisely what Matthew gives as a new law. "I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," says Isaiah (1, 6). "Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him," says Jeremiah in Lamentations (iii, 30). "If any demand thy ass, give him also the saddle," says the Talmud (Baba kamma, 92, 2); and this saying is described as a popular proverb. "Let him strike thee," says Plato (Gorgias, 527), giving counsel how to deal with an angry man.

How futile is the modern excuse that, while the counsel of Jesus is beyond the range of human nature, it on that very account evinces a superhuman standard of conduct, and could not have been thought out by a mere biographer. Like all these ascetic exaggerations, it occurred to nearly every moralist. The age was morbid, because old faiths had broken down and men had not yet knowledge enough to realize their true positions in the universe. Morbid asceticism arose as naturally as morbid sensuality. Every single pagan moralist at one time or other praised "passive resistance." You must smile, they said, when the angry man insults or strikes you. It is supposed to do him good. Try it.

Once, being at lunch in the Harvard Club with the profoundly Christian Theodore Roosevelt, I remarked, apropos of pacifism (of which one of the guests had maliciously accused me), that my principle was: "If any man smite thee on one cheek, smite him promptly on both." Roosevelt's roar of laughter was not complimentary to the Sermon on the Mount. His son told me later that the Colonel had gone around New York for a week telling people that he had "met a pacifist after his own heart." It is sheer bunk to pretend to admire these "elevated" counsels.

I reserve for the next section the equally famous counsel to love one's enemies, merely remarking here that we have one more plain proof that no Palestinian Jew ever said what Matthew attributes to Christ. When the writer speaks of the "eye for an eye" principle as the Jewish law, he has at least a possible reference to Exodus though no fair-minded person would quote this as "the law," when later books of the Old Testament entirely undo it. But when Jesus is represented as saying in the Sermon on the Mount, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy," we can say at once that it is a false representation. There is no such passage anywhere in the Old Testament. The contrary is repeatedly said; and the Rabbis of the Talmud have, as we shall see, the same teaching. If then, the first part of the sentence is clearly due to some bitterly anti-Jewish writer of a later date, so, apparently, is the counsel to love one's enemies. There was, in fact, as we shall see, no original-

ity in the counsel. It was a platitude of the super-ethics of the time.

The modern Christian does not read Plato, Epictetus, Plutarch, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius. He knows, without reading them, that the Gospel is far superior to them. He is quite sure of the originality of Christ without ever taking the trouble to inquire whether any other moralist ever said the same things. He does not, of course, read the Talmud, and one may excuse him, for a very large part of it is tedious, if not ridiculous; though it would at least teach him that the sayings of Jesus were platitudes of the Jewish schools in the first century. But he may at least be supposed to read the Old Testament occasionally; and there is not a single point of "Christian" morality that is not found in it.

GOLDEN RULES

In every dissertation on the supreme excellence and originality of Christ as a moralist we are first, and most trimphantly, confronted with the Golden Rule:

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

For forty years I have heard or read disputes about this famous rule. Does it not place Jesus eminently above any other moralist that ever lived? The opponent answers, no, because Kong-fu-tse gave the same rule six centuries earlier; and there is then a long and angry discussion—entirely contrary to the teaching of both Jesus and Kong-fu-tse—as to whether the Chinese moralist did not give his rule in "a merely negative form."

Neither side seems to notice that the Golden Rule ends in the Gospel with this phrase: "For this is the law and the prophets." The writers of the Gospels, probably Greek Christians, steeped in the rancor that grew up between Jews and Christians, say some harsh and untrue things about the Jews. As we saw, they misrepresent the "old law." They pitch it at a lower note than it really had in order to make Jesus superior to it and original. But precisely here where Jesus is said by his modern admirers to be most clearly original, they claim no originality at all. They make him say that he is merely recommending them to observe the old law.

I am not selecting the Golden Rule for special treatment on the ground of its intrinsic importance. It is trite, obvious, proverbial all over the world ("Do as you would be done by"), and so far from being beyond the range of human wisdom that children quite commonly formulate it as a sensible code of social conduct in their little spheres. Judge Ben B. Lindsey once told me that, in dealing with the most refractory boy he had ever had, he had brought him to his senses only by applying that rule, in a secular sense. It is so far from being religious, or in any way necessarily connected with religion, that it is expressly put by

Jesus (or the writer of the Gospel) on a utilitarian basis. The preceding verses plainly say that you are to give to others and then you may expect gifts from them. It is a summary of our social or utilitarian ethic: which Christians affect to despise. But it is a weakly worded summary, a mere popular phrase.

A divine would probably remind me that this rule of life takes a "sublimer"—how they love that word sublime, and how utterly misplaced it is—form in the command: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Many, at least, incautiously choose this as the most characteristic saying of Jesus. It is an unhappy choice, for the sentence is taken verbatim from one of the books of the Old Testament (Leviticus xix, 18).

People forget sometimes, in comparing the morality of the Old Testament with that of the New, that the one covers many centuries, and reflects very different stages of moral evolution, while the Gospels represent a single, and much later, stage. You can quote harsh sayings from the Old Testament; and you can find the antidote, the parallel with the sayings of Jesus, somewhere else in the book—in the later psalms, or Isaiah, or Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes. Leviticus is by no means so early as its position in the Bible suggests. It belongs to the fifth century, when the Jews had been raised to a higher level by the Babylonians and the Persians. And in a series of counsels or commands, which are quite parallel with the counsels of the Sermon on the Mount, the priestly writer lays down the law of brotherly love.

It is, like so much of this ancient morality, an exaggeration. It is a psychological impossibility for any man to love another as he loves himself: that is to say, in practical language, to desire as keenly for another as he does for himself. Thirty years ago I was a professor of philosophy (which included psychology) in a Roman Catholic seminary; and I remember well two Latin aphorisms which my manual directed me to expound to my clerical pupils. The first was: The will desires only what is good (to it). The second was: The will desires only *its own* good. It was an archaic system of psychology, but on that point the modern psychology of volitions or desires does not differ. A saint or a reformer may seem to love his neighbor as himself; but the saint loves at the same time the reward in heaven which will crown his altruism, and the reformer is not unmindful of the crown on earth. There is only one possible form of altruism: the form which finds expression in the Golden Rule—enlightened egoism.

And to that rule one could quote substantial parallels from the moralists of every civilization. Buddha, if one prefers the more emotional expression that one must love others as one loves oneself, far surpassed Jesus. Love, the love of man for man, was an essential part of his teaching. Indeed, of love of oneself he never dreamed. His whole mission to the common folk about him was

to love each other and behave as if they loved each other. The Golden Rule, as such, would have been deemed by Buddha a cold and calculating expression of the true ideal.

In China both the great moralists, Kong-fu-tse and Lao-tse, formulated the Golden Rule. Kong-fu-tse commonly gave as the rule of conduct certain formulas which were identical in substance with that of Christ, but a disciple one day asked him to put in a single word the essential rule of life. A word, in Chinese, means, not so many letters of the alphabet, but a single character, or two characters combined in one. It was solely on this account that Kong-fu-tse gave his rule in the very short form "Reciprocity," as it is usually translated. The common statement of Christian controversial writers that he put it in a negative form is quite false. Literally, the character he used was the composite character "as heart"; have one heart with your fellowmen, or behave to them as you would have them behave to you. Lao-tse, his contemporary, very fairly expressed the same rule.

These moralists lived several centuries before the Christian era opened. By the time the Gospels were written Stoicism had inspired a large number of moralists of the ascetic type, and the Greco-Roman world had almost as great a medley of moralities as it had of mythologies. Golden Rules were given on every hand, and the sentiment of the Golden Rule of Kong-fu-tse and Jesus was as familiar as the belief in one God.

FUTILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC

Some years ago I wrote a work entitled "The Bankruptcy of Religion." A few reviewers, lay churchmen, smiled at the title. Does not Christianity still dominate civilization? But amongst the many letters which the book brought me was one from an elderly clergyman of the Church of England, in active service, confessing his entire agreement with me. He and large numbers of the clergy were, he said, with a pathetic reference to the economic necessity which enslaved them to error, Agnostics. And the part of my work which won his warmest approval was that which claimed a moral, as well as an intellectual, bankruptcy of the Churches.

The world, once it had been compelled to accept the Gospels, sank rapidly into the Dark Ages, when vice and violence ruled Europe. It is another legend or myth of the Churches that Christianity elevated civilization. Europe sank far lower than it had been in pagan days.

The preacher, who knows nothing of moral and social history, distracts attention from this broad failure of Christian morality by enlarging upon the multitudes of saints and martyrs that it inspired. It would be more accurate to enlarge on the number of legends of forged lives, of saints and martyrs that it inspired. Martyrs were created by the hundred by the corrupt Roman writers

of the early Middle Ages. As to saints, we will keep a broad mind and admit that, during the fifteen hundred years of Christian domination, thousands of men and women have found real inspiration in the Gospels; as similar thousands found it in the words of Buddha or of Kong-fu-tse. But this is a trifle compared with the countless millions whose coarse and violent lives throughout the whole of that vast period reflected anything but the ideals of the Gospels.

Why was this supposed teaching of Jesus so ineffective? I would agree with the Protestant that much of the blame is due to the sacerdotal system of the Church of Rome. Certainly I would not agree with him that there was an improvement after the Reformation. England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was almost, if not quite, as immoral as during the Middle Ages. It was only in the nineteenth century, especially the latter part of the nineteenth century, that the standard of taste and conduct rose to the level on which we now live. But the fault lay predominantly with Rome. Dense ignorance always means coarseness; and the Church was responsible for the ignorance of Europe. Moreover, the ritual service, the doctrine of Purgatory and indulgences, the practice of confession, the mechanical rites of kissing relics and attending services in an unintelligible language, all tended to blunt, instead of promote, moral delicacy.

But the teaching of the Gospels was not even in itself calculated to help the mass of men. I have said elsewhere that Jesus was probably an Essenian monk. Such ascetic exaggerations as are attributed to him were not in those days confined to monks. Wandering moralists as well as Egyptian and Palestinian monks said them. Wealthy men like Seneca, emperors like Marcus Aurelius, said them, as well as slaves like Epictetus. Philosophers like Plato and Zeno and Plutarch were little less ascetic in their denunciations of the flesh and its lusts.

But all moral rhetoric of this kind is bound to be ineffective with the mass of mankind. Buddha was not more successful in Asia, on this side, than Plato was in Greece or Jesus in later Europe. Our blood is as much a part of our nature as is our reason. We feel the falseness of a philosophy or an ethic that belittles the pleasure of life and would condemn us, in a world of sunshine and flowers, to close our eyes to the light and color. Only men and women of a peculiar nature ever pay implicit attention to such counsels. The teaching of Jesus was condemned to futility by its own exaggerations. It is not too hard for human nature; but human nature healthily refuses to be ruled by it.

The Churches dare not in our age consistently advocate their Christian ethic. It is a condemnation, root and branch, of all pleasure. An ethic which puts married folk on a lower level, as weaklings who cannot scale the heights of superiority, has no place

in the twentieth century. An ethic that preaches that a man must embrace poverty if he would be really virtuous dare not be urged from any pulpit in America. An ethic that bids the really just man turn the other cheek to the smiter is not lofty or sublime, but a sheer blunder. And these things are essential parts of Christ's morality, however little they may be obtruded in Christian morality.

In fine, the entire atmosphere of the morality of Jesus in the Gospels unfits it for use in modern times. Efforts have been made to explain away the belief in hell of the prophet of Nazareth—ridiculous efforts to get rid of the plain meaning of the Greek words used in the Gospels—but no amount of ingenuity will explain away his belief that the end of the world was near. I should be disposed, on broad grounds, to believe that this is one of the few doctrines we can safely attribute to Jesus himself, not to the compilers of the Gospels. For the source of that belief we must look toward Persia, not the Greek world.

It falsifies the entire conception of human life and duty, and makes the morality of the Gospels quite unsuitable for our time. In the light of that belief we can easily understand the ascetic exaggerations of the sayings of Jesus; and we can just as easily understand how it was that Christian morality never inspired social justice: which is immeasurably more important than personal virtue. Not one of the greater problems of life was ever confronted by the Gospel Jesus or early Christianity. It was left to pagan moralists to denounce war and slavery. It was left to Agnostic sociologists to discover that brutal material conditions would be reflected in brutality of mind, and that a low intellectual level meant infallibly for the majority of men a low moral level. Our modern conception of character and the way to improve and strengthen character has nothing in common with the moral platitudes of ancient Judea.

Nor has our personal conception of our rights anything in common with an ethic which was framed in the belief that God would shortly destroy the earth by fire and summon the souls of all men before his throne. In all our rebellions there is one sound note; we claim a freedom restricted only by the rights of others that we shall not hurt them. The alternative to that would be anarchy. The character of our age is that it is increasingly social, and only a social ethic will meet its needs. Let the platitudes and eccentricities of the Gospels slumber in the Greek books in which they were written. In the great light which has broken upon the world we cast aside the little lamps of long ago. We see our universe from end to end. We chart our path with a knowledge which no other age ever possessed. We need no moralists of old times to tell us how to behave.

CHAPTER XIV

Pagan Christs Before Jesus

The Myth of the Virgin Birth—Christmas Before Christ—
Divine Sons and Sages—Christ and Krishna

The Myth of the Virgin Birth

THERE are few doctrines of the Christian faith so vulnerable, so slight in their foundations, as this of the virgin birth of Jesus. It is the feeblest statement about Jesus in the whole of the Gospels. It is unknown to Paul. It grows under our eyes in the New Testament. And from end to end of the Greco-Roman world, in which the books of the New Testament were gradually evolved, we find the mythical material which is successively wrought into the familiar story.

Let us first examine the story in the Gospels. The earliest Christian writings are Paul's Epistles. Paul insists that Jesus was "born of a woman"; but who the woman was he cares not the toss of a coin, and he knows of no miracle in the conception.

The next writing, chronologically, is the Gospel of Mark. As we have it, there is no proof that it existed within forty years of the death of Christ; yet it is ignorant of the tremendous miracle of the virgin birth. Jesus, in Mark, enters history, becomes more than an ordinary man, at the age of thirty. Apparently the original Mark was just a description of a singularly gifted prophet who was called by God, or converted by John, in his early manhood.

Matthew, the next Gospel, also seems in its original form to have known nothing unusual about the birth of Jesus. The first two chapters are an afterthought. The Gospel really begins, at the third chapter, as that of Mark does. Then someone prefaced it with one of the two genealogies of Jesus that were in circulation (i, 1-17). Next—the new beginning is quite clear—somebody added a short account of how Jesus was born (i, 18-25). Lastly some other hand added the legends of Chapter ii.

Luke, a later Gospel, has a much more developed version of the conception and the birth, How, by the way, we have come to speak, as we always do, about the "virgin birth" or "miraculous birth," I do not know. It is the conception, not the birth, that is held to have been miraculous. The practice has misled more than one Rationalist into thinking that the "immaculate conception" of

Mary—that is to say, the conception of Mary *by her mother*—is the same thing as the virgin birth of Jesus.

However, let us look closely at this late story given in Luke. Strange, isn't it, that Mary and Elizabeth and Zacharias had such remarkable experiences, and kept them such a dead secret that Paul and Mark never heard of them! One desperate and learned divine, Professor Sanday, suggests that Mary, late in life, confided these things (including, I suppose, the very words of the long impromptu poem she composed) to a lady friend, and she, late in life, confided them to the writer of Luke. But Professor Sanday forgets to explain the long secrecy. Four times in the New Testament the brothers of Jesus are mentioned, yet Mary is supposed to have known that he had none. Joseph knew it still better. For some mysterious reason the great events of Chapters i and ii, which would have converted half of Galilee, had to remain a family secret until the end of the century.

Well, let us try again. We are first told that a priest named Zacharias had a barren wife, and "an angel of the Lord" appeared and told him that his wife would have a son. This son is to be "great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink"; and then the angel went and said much the same to Mary, except that her son was to be fatherless.

Now, divines very delicately avoid bringing to the notice of their readers another passage of the Bible which I will here reproduce. It is many centuries older than Luke—it is in Judges, Chapter xiii—and is really interesting:

> 2. And there was a certain man of Zorah . . . and his wife was barren and bare not.
>
> 3. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her: Behold, now thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive and bear a son.
>
> 4. Now, therefore, beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing;
>
> 5. For, lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head; for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb.

Rather suggestive, isn't it?

However, the angel tells Mary that she will conceive. As she is engaged to be married, this should not be a very startling announcement; but Mary is troubled and expostulates that she "knows no man." We might leniently suppose that the angel had a cold, and that Mary understood him to say that she had already conceived. But the oldest Latin manuscript of Luke has not the words: "How can this be: I know no man." Somebody, still later, has tampered with Luke and put in a stupid interpolation. And the source of the interpolation is known. An apocryphal gospel of the second century describes Mary as vowed to virginity for life,

not engaged to Joseph; and such virgins sometimes observe their vows.

Next we are told that "these things were noised abroad through all the hill country of Judea," and created an enormous sensation. But apparently everybody forgot all about them again, when Jesus was a boy, and the secret was only let out a hundred years later. The other inspired writer makes Mary herself and her sons think of putting Jesus under restraint on the ground that his mind became deranged by his idea of a mission! So Mary also had forgotten it, temporarily.

However, the birth-time arrived; and it was a very romantic birth, in the manger of a stable. You see, the Old Testament had predicted that the Messiah was to be of "the seed of David"; as the Pharisees are made to remind Jesus in the Gospels. The poor Gospel writers here were in a dilemma. Mary, being related to the priest's wife, was presumably of the house of Aaron, not David, yet they had to bring in David. So they made Davidic genealogies —which seems to have been unknown to Jesus when the Pharisees wanted his pedigree—for Joseph; and, after all, Joseph was the father of Jesus in every sense except one—his seed.

Then, since the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, as the Old Testament said, Luke explains. The Emperor Augustus decreed that "all the world should be taxed," and each man was to go, with his family, to the city of his fathers. This meant a journey of eighty miles for the poor carpenter and his bearing wife; and since every family in Judea had to do this musical-choir's performance, and get to the city of his ancestor of a thousand years earlier, Judea must have presented a highly interesting spectacle. The most practical Government of ancient times, the Roman, is supposed to have ordered this piece of lunacy, through the Governor Cyrenius. But we learn from the historian Josephus that what Cyrenius really did was a very much smaller matter, and that it was done in the year 6 A. D., or ten years *after* the birth of Jesus. Moreover, northern Palestine was not under Cyrenius, but under the independent prince Herod Antipas; and the Jews had so little in the way of tax-registers that in the year 66 A. D. they had to calculate the population from the number of paschal lambs.

No Gospel says that Jesus was born in winter. The snow-that-lay-on-the-ground is an artistic addition of a much later age. But the journey to Bethlehem and the manger have now melted away like the snow. Jesus was presumably, as Mark intimates, born in Nazareth in the usual prosy way. His genealogy in Matthew ends, in the oldest Syriac version of the Gospel, with the plump statement, "And Joseph begat Jesus."

But Luke's fairy tales are not yet over. There were more miracles, which the shepherds "made known abroad"; and everybody forgot in a few years. Then the incarnate God submitted to the

delicate operation known politely as circumcision; and there were more miracles. Yet, when this wonderful being, at the age of twelve, showed signs of precocious wisdom, his father and mother "were amazed" (ii, 48) and they nearly went so far as to "box his ears."

Matthew—to turn to him for a moment—tells us of other wonders. A miraculous star brought three wise men from the east to Judea. How the star moved along in such a way as to guide them, and why it ceased to guide them any longer when they got to Judea (and so caused the murder of thousands of innocent babes), we are not told. This story makes its first appearance about the year 119 A. D., and in Rome; and, curiously enough, three wise men had in 66 A. D. been brought to Rome from the east to worship the emperor! As to the star, had not the inspired Balaam predicted: "There shall come forth a star out of Jacob"? (Numbers xxiv, 17).

Next Matthew tells us the tallest story in the whole of this tissue of legends. These wise men, led by a star which nobody sees but themselves, and which moves in such a way as to guide them across country—one apologist suggests that it was a meteorite (which moves at the rate of about a hundred miles a second!)—arrive at Jerusalem and lose the scent. The divine guidance then acts in a way which certainly perplexes the mere human mind. The sages are moved to go and tell King Herod that a new "King of the Jews" has been born somewhere; and Herod, in a fury, and believing the statement with childish credulity, orders the murder of all the children in Bethlehem and the entire region under the age of two and a half years. The little Almighty is taken, presumably on donkeyback, hundreds of miles across the desert, to get out of the way, and let the innocent suffer. Miracles and apparitions crowd the narrative; but the simple miracle of changing the king's heart and sparing the children occurs to nobody.

The Christian cannot expect a non-Christian to write politely about such things as this. What we may more profitably do, however, is to remind him that just such a massacre and hiding of a child of great promise from the wrath of a king is one of the oldest themes in mythology. Turn to Exodus (i, 15-22):

> And the King of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives. . . . And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him. . . .

And so Moses was (like Sargon of Babylon thousands of years before) hidden in an ark of bulrushes on the river. Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells us that King Cyrus of Persia had similarly to be hidden away at birth from a jealous king; and every Jew knew the story of Cyrus. Suetonius, the Roman historian, gives a similar legend about the birth of the Emperor Augustus. But one

could fill whole pages with legends of new-born gods and mortals of great promise thus pursued by reigning monarchs, and we will return to the subject later. The wholesale "massacre" alone is peculiar to the Jesus-story; and that horrible detail is enough of itself to damn it. No Jewish writer ever heard of the horror.

Thus the wonderful story of the birth of Jesus, which grows before our eyes in the New Testament, does not appear until at least a century after the event. "What," asks the learned divine Bishop Rashdall, "would an historian make of a legend about the birth of Napoleon which did not appear until a hundred years after the event?"

CHRISTMAS BEFORE CHRIST

As I have said, there is no clue in the Gospels to the time of the year when Jesus is supposed to have been born: except, indeed, that it cannot have been midwinter, for that is the rainy season and shepherds would *not* be out at night. Even Jewish mothers would cherish birthdays; but Miriam of Nazareth either forgot the date of that very wonderful day or omitted to mention it in her communication, late in life, of the remarkable story. Early Christendom found itself in the peculiar position of telling the world of the most tremendous birth there ever was on this planet and being quite unable to say when it happened. It was centuries before even the year could be determined; and then it was determined wrongly. Nobody now holds that Jesus was born in the year 1 A. D.

The result was that for several hundred years the various Churches celebrated the birthday of the Lord on different dates. The eastern Churches generally kept it on January 6th, which is now the Epiphany. Other Churches chose April 24th or 25th; and some placed it in May. It was not until 354 A. D. that the Church chose December 25th as the anniversary of the birthday of Christ. Rome was then the leading Church; and why Rome hesitated so long, and why in the middle of the fourth century (when it was, with imperial aid, trying to bring in the whole Roman Empire) it had to choose December 25th, we must now see.

In order to realize it, to see how the rise of Christianity is a very human part of human evolution, let us imagine ourselves as members of the small and obscure group of Christians in Rome, say, in the fourth century. We have two poor meeting-places—one of them is a room above a small wine-shop—in the despised quarter of Rome beyond the river (the slope of the Vatican Hill) where criminals live and the dead are buried.

Mid-winter approaches and Rome is lit up with joy. It is the festival of the old vegetation-god Saturn who (as a god) died, or was displaced by Jupiter, the sky-god. But he has a fine temple on the Capitol, and his festival lasts seven days and is the most joyous time of the joyous Roman year. For one day slaves are free. They

don the conical cap of the freedman—as good Christians continue at Christmas to don such caps of paper, and hilarious Americans don them at festive dinners today—and sit at table while masters wait on them.

Stalls laden with presents line the streets near the Forum; and the great present of the season is a doll, of wax or terra-cotta. Hundreds of thousands of dolls lie on the stalls or in the arms of passers-by. Once, no doubt, human beings were sacrificed to Saturn, and, as man grew larger than his religion, as he constantly does, the god (or his priests) had to be content with effigies of men or maids, or dolls. Crowds fill the streets and raise festive cries. It was a time of peace on earth—for by Roman law no war could begin during the Saturnalia—and of good-will toward all men.

For a whole week, from December 17th to 24th, no work is done. The one law is good cheer, good nature. But the 25th also is a solemn festival, for it is marked in large type in the Roman calendar "Birthday of the Unconquered Sun."

Neither Romans nor Christians understood these things. The festival went back far into the mists of prehistoric times. It had been earlier a one-day festival, the feast of Saturn: a very important magico-religious festival for insuring the harvest of the next year, rejoicing that the year's work was over, and, no doubt, helping and propitiating the god of fecundity by generous indulgence in wine and love. Dimly, also, these people knew that the mysterious winter dying of the sun was arrested. It was on the turn. But only an accurate astronomy could decide which was the real day of the solstice, so they celebrated the 25th as the great day of the sun's rebirth.

We can well understand the anxious debates of these early Christians about the birthday of the Lord. Christ was the real sun that had risen upon the world. Why not boldly take "the birthday of the unconquered sun"? That would, incidentally, help to conciliate "the masses." But all this ribaldry and license and fooling . . . . Besides, there was another reason.

While the Christians gathered dingily in their two little back-rooms on the Vatican Hill, there was another and more prosperous Asiatic religion housed on the same hill. Mithraism, as it was called, gave the Christians a very anxious time: not merely because it spread more rapidly, and was more respected, but because it was so strikingly like Christianity.

Mithra was an old Aryan sun-god. The reform of the Persian religion by Zarathustra had put the ethical deity Ahura Mazda so high above the old nature-gods that he was practically the one god. But Mithra stole upward, as gods do, and Persian kings of the fifth century B. C. put him on a level with Ahura Mazda.

Then the Persians conquered and blended with Babylon, and Mithra rose to the supreme position and became an intensely ethical

deity. He was, like Aten, the sun of the world in the same sense as Christ. He was honored with the sacrifice of the pleasures of life, and was himself credited with no amours as Zeus was. Drastic asceticism and purity were demanded of his worshipers. They were baptized in blood. They practised the most severe austerities and fasts. They had a communion-supper of bread and wine. They worshiped Mithra in underground temples, or artificial caves, which blazed with the light of candles and reeked with incense.

And every year they celebrated the birthday of this god who had come, they said, to take away the sins of the world; and the day was December 25th. As that day approached, near midnight of the 24th, Christians might see the stern devotees of Mithra going to their temple on the Vatican, and at midnight it would shine with joy and light. The Savior of the world was born. He had been born in a cave, like so many other sun-gods: and some of the apocryphal Gospels put the birth of Christ in a cave. He had had no earthly father. He was born to free men from sin, to redeem them.

F. Cumont, the great authority on Mithra, has laboriously collected for us all these details about the Persian religion, and more than one of the Christian Fathers refers nervously to the close parallel of the two religions. The Savior Mithra was in possession, had been in possession for ages, of December 25th as his birthday. He was the real "unconquered sun": a sun-god transformed into a spiritual god, with light as his emblem and purity his supreme command. What could the Christians do? Nothing, until they had the ear of the emperors. Then they appropriated December 25th, and even bits of the Mithraic ritual; and they so zealously destroyed the traces of the Mithraic religion that one has to be a scholar to know anything about it.

The Saturnalia and "the birthday of the unconquered sun" and the birthday of Mithra were not all. A Roman writer of the fourth century, Macrobius, in a work called "Saturnalia" (i, 18), discusses the practice of representing the gods in the temples as of different ages. He says:

> These differences of age refer to the sun, which seems to be a babe at the winter solstice, *as the Egyptians represent him in their temples on a certain day:* that being the shortest day, he is then supposed to be small and *an infant.*

And this is confirmed by, and receives very interesting additions from, a Christian writer, the author of the "Paschal Chronicle." He says:

> Jeremiah gave a sign to the Egyptian priests, saying that their idols would be destroyed by a *child-savior, born of a virgin and lying in a manger.* Wherefore they still worship as a goddess a virgin-mother, and adore an infant in a manger. (Col. 385 in the Migne edition, vol. XCII.)

The explanation is, of course, ludicrous. As I explain in the chapter on Egyptian religion, Horus, the deity in question, was a very old sun-god of the Egyptians. In the adjustment of the rival Egyptian gods, when the tribes were amalgamated in one kingdom, Horus was made the son of Osiris and Isis. The latter goddess was, as I said, the sister and the spouse (or lover) of Osiris; but whether we should speak of her as "a virgin mother" is a matter of words. In one Egyptian myth she was fecundated by Osiris in their mother's womb: in another and more popular, she was miraculously impregnated by contact with the phallus of the dead Osiris. Virginity in goddesses is a relative matter.

Whatever we make of the original myth, however, Isis seems to have been originally a virgin (or, perhaps, sexless) goddess, and in the later period of Egyptian religion she was again considered a virgin goddess, demanding very strict abstinence from her devotees. It is at this period, apparently, that the birthday of Horus was annually celebrated, about December 25th, in the temples. As both Macrobius and the Christian writer say, a figure of Horus as a baby was laid in a manger, in a scenic reconstruction of a stable, and a statue of Isis was placed beside it. Horus was, in a sense, the Savior of mankind. He was their avenger against the powers of darkness; he was the light of the world. His birth-festival was a real Christmas before Christ.

In passing, we may recall that just such a spectacle is presented in every Roman Catholic church in the world on December 25th. Catholics will tell you that St. Francis of Assisi invented this tender and touching method of bringing home to men the humble birth of the redeemer. I know too much about Francis of Assisi to imagine that he had ever read the obscure "Paschal Chronicle," in which I discovered this interesting passage some years ago. But certainly some other Christian writer had seen and reproduced it, and it had come to the knowledge of Francis. If a Catholic prefers to believe that Francis of Assisi did in reality conceive this method of representing the birth of Christ, he could not give us a better proof of the identity of the Christian and the Egyptian belief! The Catholic "crib" is an exact reproduction of the "show" exhibited in Egyptian temples centuries before Christ; and the Egyptian legend itself is thousands of years older than Jeremiah. On the analogy of the Christian practice we may infer that the Egyptian legend described Isis as having given birth to her divine son in a stable. In Alexandria there was a similar Greek celebration on December 25th of the birth of a divine son to Kore (the "virgin").

And this is not the end. The Greeks had a similar celebration. The general idea of a divine son being born in a cave was, as we shall see presently, common; or there were actually several scenic representations of the birth of these gods in their festivals. J. M. Robertson gives three in his "Christianity and Mythology"

(p. 330). Hermes, the Logos (like Jesus in John), the messenger of the gods, son of Zeus and the virgin Maia, was born in a cave, and he performed extraordinary prodigies a few hours after birth. He was represented as a "child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." Dionysos (or Bacchus) was similarly represented. The image of him as a babe was laid in a basket-cradle in the cave in which he was born. There is good reason to think that Mithra was figured in the same way.

We understand why the Church so long hesitated to put the birth of Christ at the winter solstice, and why there was no scenic representation of the birth until the Middle Ages. From end to end of the Roman Empire December 25th was the birthday of the unconquered sun, of the Savior Mithra, and of the divine Horus and they and the others I have mentioned, whose festivals were in other seasons, were represented almost exactly as the birth of Christ was described in the Gospels and is depicted in Catholic churches today.

And we must not overlook the Teutonic element. Every Roman was familiar from childhood with the great mid-winter festival; and in the earliest days of the Christian era the religions of Persia and Egypt, with similar festivals, spread over the Empire. But the nations of the north also had their greatest festival of year in mid-winter. To these northern barbarians, shuddering in the snow-laden forests beyond the Danube, the return of the sun was the most desired event of the year; and they soon learned, approximately, the time—the winter solstice—when the "wheel" turned. The sun was figured as a fiery wheel; and as late as the nineteenth century there were parts of France where a straw wheel was set on fire and rolled down a hill, to give an augury of the next harvest.

Hence "Yule" (from the same old Teutonic word *hoel* or wheel) was the outstanding festival of the ancestors of the French and Germans, the English and Scandinavians. The sun was born; and fires ("Yule-logs," such as are burned in British homes at Christmas today) flamed in the forest-villages, the huts were decorated with holly and evergreens, Yule trees were laden with presents, and stores of solid food and strong drink were lavishly opened. This lasted until Twelfth Day, now Epiphany.

Thus almost the entire civilized world of more than two thousand years ago "had its Christmas before Christ." "The figure of Christ," says Kalthoff, "is drawn in all its chief features before a line of the Gospels was written." At least the figure of Jesus in what is deemed its most captivating form was drawn in every feature long before it was presented in the Gospels. The first symbol of the Christian religion, the manger or basket-cradle of the divine child, the supposed unique exhortation to humility, was one of the most familiar religious emblems of the pagan world. Had it been exhibited to a crowd in one of the cosmopolitan cities of the Empire, it would have been strange or new to very few. One might

pronounce it Horus, another Mithra, another Hermes, another Dionysos; but all would have shrugged their shoulders nonchalantly at the news that it was just another divine child in the great family of gods. The world flowed on. The names only were changed.

DIVINE SONS AND SAGES

It is difficult to keep a firm sense of proportion in studying such a question as that which now occupies us. We swim in a stream of myths that almost makes us dizzy. We find Christs and Christmases, virgin mothers and divine sons, stable births and persecuting monarchs, angelic annunciations and foster-fathers throughout nearly the whole religious world of two thousand years ago.

These things are now a settled part of our knowledge. The celebrations of the birthdays of Mithra and Horus are as certain as the Saturnalia. It is as certain that there were scores of legends of the miraculous birth of gods, demi-gods, and heroes in the ancient world as it is that the Chaldeans knew astronomy and the Romans knew shorthand.

There is, therefore, a strong temptation to dissolve away the whole story of Jesus into mythical elements: to regard it merely as a mosaic made out of differently colored bits of marble from the quarries of the older religions. The sun-myth theory, in particular, is strained to explain all kinds of innocent-looking statements of the biography of Jesus in the Gospels. I cannot follow these writers. The criticisms which Dr. F. C. Conybeare (a doctor of theology, yet an Agnostic, and a fine scholar) has too harshly directed at them in his "Historical Christ" seem to me in substance justified.

But in that work (and his equally useful and judicious "Myth, Magic and Morals," which also is really about the subject we are discussing) Dr. Conybeare makes one serious mistake. He knows well all the figures of history and mythology to which are attached these legends of supernatural birth and world-redeeming character. But are we to suppose, he asks, that the not very well educated writers of the Gospels knew these things? The objection certainly holds for some of the mythical elements which have been traced to Rome or India, and to obscure poetry and ritual. The writers of the Gospels were ill-educated Syrians or Greeks (I prefer to think, Greeks) whose acquaintance with comparative religion was limited. "Not too much zeal" is a good motto for mythologists.

But the chief mythical constituents of the life of Jesus were known all over the cosmopolitan Greco-Roman world: most particularly in that overlapping fringe of the Greco-Roman and the Persian-Egyptian worlds—the eastern coast of the Mediterranean —where the Gospels were certainly composed. Whatever city we may favor as the cradle of the Gospels, Alexandria or Antioch,

Smyrna or Ephesus, every myth and ritual representation we have so far mentioned was familiar there. Mithraism spread from Persia to Britain. Roman soldiers prayed to Mithra in the towers in which they guarded the north of England from the marauding Scots. The religion of Isis and Horus was even more familiar round the Mediterranean. The legend and ritual of Dionysos were hardly less familiar.

And this is not yet half the story of the saturation, before the time of Jesus, of the Greco-Roman world with Christ-like myths. It is advisable first to lay the whole material, or as much of it as can be compressed here, before the reader, and then we may consider how it must affect belief in the story of Jesus.

I am mainly concerned in this chapter with the legend of the virgin birth, but the death and resurrection legends were just as widely diffused. Now, in the face of the matter it may not seem necessary to appeal to any pagan beliefs to explain this Christian legend. The Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament plainly (by a false translation) said, "A virgin shall conceive"; and this was referred to the Messiah. Moreover, the belief in the divinity of Christ, which very quickly developed, would of itself inspire the idea that the divine Jesus, who frowned on or despised conjugal relations, had not chosen to come into the world by that agency. But the world of the time was so steeped in myths of virgin births that the Gospel writers, or the early Christians in whose circles the Gospel stories developed, must have had many cases in mind.

But we must not be tempted to wander over that world of weird and wonderful superstitions of two thousand years ago. No idea was more familiar than the impregnation of a woman by a deity; and, if she had been hitherto a virgin, she was held to be a virgin mother. Every Greek and Egyptian knew a score of such; and it was in the Greco-Egyption world that the Christian legend evolved. Most prominent of all were the greatest of Egyptian goddesses, Isis, and the greatest of Greek goddesses, Cybele. When at last the Church was forced to permit a veneration of a semi-divine mother, to compete with the most popular feature of pagan religion, statues of and hymns to Isis and Cybele were appropriated to Mary.

CHRIST AND KRISHNA

We may now pause to consider the moral, the suggestion, of this rich mythology of the old Jewish and pagan world. Had I the leisure and space of Sir J. G. Frazer, I might expand and arrange this material in a series of volumes which would show the human imagination developing the mythical forms of its religious ideas and passing gradually from prehistoric poetry to the dogmatic creed of the new religion. Here I must be content to summarize the

facts and briefly indicate what seem to be the reasonable conclusions from them.

And the first consideration which, on a reasonable view, must occur to any impartial person is that, if the birth of an incarnate god had been annually celebrated for ages in the ancient world, and was celebrated particularly in the region where Christianity developed, it is not in the least likely that such a birth at last took place as an historical event. Setting aside religious sentiment, taking a purely human or historical view of the matter, there is a very strong presumption that the early Christians attributed to their savior the kind of birth that was ascribed to the deities of rival religions.

This presumption becomes a practical certainty when we recall how slowly the belief grew up in the Christian body, and how late it was. Paul knows nothing of it. Mark, which on many grounds we know to be the oldest Gospel, knows nothing of it. Matthew in his original form knows nothing of it. Luke, the latest, has a long story about it. We reach something like the third decade of the second century before the story appears; though it must unquestionably have circulated in the Churches for some time before Luke could write it.

The real difficulty, which is often not appreciated by Rationalists, is to understand the frame of mind of men and women who, while regarding pagan religions as inventions of the devil, could borrow any mythical material from them. Clerics would do better to use that argument, rather than ask people to believe the virgin birth because it is in Luke, when there is not a shred of evidence that it was in Luke before at least the end of the first century.

But we must not exaggerate this difficulty. Rome, when it forced Christianity upon Europe, deliberately adopted a very large amount of paganism. Bits of ritual, altars, statues, hymns, local deities, etc., were taken into the new religion. Does even the orthodox suppose that Jesus ordered the use of candles, incense, holy water, and vestments? Yet these things were fully adopted by the new religion.

The truth is that we have very little historical knowledge of the Christians of the first century. Between the simple groups of Jesus-worshipers of Paul's Epistles and Acts, and the developed Christian doctrine of the second century, lies a whole world of evolution on which we have no positive light. The reasonable view, for this part of the life of Jesus, seems to be that the influence of the Old Testament, the shape given by the Jews to the supposed messianic prophecies, the natural impulse of ascetic believers to isolate Jesus from all sexual intercourse, *and* the broad beliefs of the Persians, Egyptians, and Greeks about the birth of their "saviors," coöperated in that obscure and loosely organized world to give shape to the traditional figure of Jesus.

At all events, Asiatic religion had its Christs as well as the religions of nearer Asia and of Europe. The Shin Ho (Holy Mother) of the Chinese and Japanese is commonly represented with a divine son. Even Kong-fu-tse, who escaped the common fate of reformers—deification—was credited with supernatural portents at birth. It is a natural urge of the devout mind to invest its hero with superhuman experiences.

It is, however, in India chiefly that we find parallels. Buddha's teaching, as settled by modern scholars, was so decidedly non-religious that one would not expect him ever to be adorned with a supernatural halo. He not only plainly disavowed all the gods of India, but he bade his disciples waste no time in disputing about God and personal immortality. He was an Agnostic, a humanitarian. Yet, pure Buddhism almost perished from the earth. What is generally called Buddhism in Asia has no more relation to Buddha's teaching than Roman Catholicism has to the teaching of Jesus. It is a system of temples and statues, priests and monks, rosaries and censers, rites and vestments, heavens and hells.

In that atmosphere the figure of Buddha himself was bound to be degraded to the divine level: I say "degraded," because what would seem admirable and superior in Buddha and Jesus if they were men, becomes petty and trivial when one measures them by a divine standard. Here I am concerned only with the birth-stories. Christian apologists deny that there is any parallel with Jesus on the narrow ground that Buddha's mother, Maya, was married. The real parallel is that the later Buddhists would not have their deity born of carnal intercourse, and he was therefore said to be the outcome of a miraculous conception. Whether in such case we ought or ought not to call his mother a virgin is a matter of words. But Mr. Robertson shows from St. Jerome that the Buddhists themselves did call Maya "a virgin"—they believed in a "virgin birth"—and he rightly rejects the statement of Professor Rhys Davids that these Buddhists understood the birth of Buddha quite differently from the Christians because "before his descent into his mother's womb he was a *deva.*" That is exactly what Christians say of Jesus.

In the very popular Hindu deity Krishna, however, we have, in many respects, a closer parallel to Christ. It is so close in some details that earlier scholars were tempted to think that these were derived from an early Christian mission to India. Modern scholars reject the idea, and they wonder only if some parts of the Christ and the Krishna legend did not come from a common source: a source which some find in the legends about the Persian King Cyrus given by the Greek historian Herodotus.

The Hindu branch of the Hindu and Persian race, the eastern part of the Aryan race, lost in the luxuriant plains of India the severity of the older religion, and richly developed its phallic and

sensual elements. In that world Buddhism failed, and the cult of Krishna gained in popularity until it appealed more than any other of the numerous religions of India. We have clear proof that the religion flourished in India two or three centuries before Christ; but whether there is any historical personage at the root of it, as in the case of Buddhism, we cannot say.

The orthodox legend of Krishna is that he was born of a married woman, Devaki; but like Maya, Buddha's mother, she was considered to have had a miraculous conception. We come nearer to the story of Jesus when we read that King Kansa was warned in a vision that the son of Devaki would destroy him, and take his place, and the child had at once to be taken away out of reach of the monarch. The king had Devaki's earlier children put to death ("murder of the innocents"), and Krishna had to be saved, as King Cyrus was saved from the King of the Medes and Moses from the King of Egypt. Krishna, moreover, gave signs of his real divine origin soon after his birth and in his boyhood. In the end Krishna—who is most un-Christlike in his amorous adventures among the milkmaids, which endear him to the unascetic Hindu—killed King Kansa, took his place, and wrought marvelous things for his people.

Thus one of the familiar religious emblems of India was the statue of the virgin mother (as the Hindus repute her) Devaki and her divine son Krishna, an incarnation of the great god Vishnu. Christian writers have held that this model was borrowed from Christianity, but, as Mr. Robertson observes, the Hindus had far earlier been in communication with Egypt and were more likely to borrow the model of Isis and Horus. One does not see why they should borrow any model. In nearly all religions with a divine mother and son a very popular image was that of the divine infant at his mother's breast or in her arms.

Two more different conceptions of an incarnate deity than those of Christ and Krishna it would be difficult to imagine. Krishna is, in a sense, a patron, a model, of amorous adventure and, in his manhood, a great warrior. Jesus is the prophet of sin, the denouncer of love, the archetype of the pacifist. Yet worshipers far away on the plains of India came to conceive the appearance on earth of their deity much as the Christians of the first century conceived theirs. Neither borrowed from the other. Was there a common source in some of the older mythic material I have described, or shall we see here only a parallel evolution of the religious imagination playing about the birth of a god? Perhaps both; but the answer does not concern me here. The Jesus-ideal is so far from unique that it is, on the contrary, one version of a legend which stretches over three thousand years of time and is found equally in Egypt and Syria, Greece and Rome. The stream of religious evolution flowed on.

CHAPTER XV

Legends of Saints and Martyrs

Discovery of the Fraud—The Genuine Persecutions—The Manufacture of Martyrs

Discovery of the Fraud

THERE came a stage in the evolution of the ancient world when the old creeds decayed, and new religions and moralities arose in every country out of their smoldering remains. Asia had passed through a somewhat similar stage hundreds of years earlier, and Buddha and Kong-fu-tse had pointed the true moral: the rejection of all religion. There were philosophers in Europe who urged the same conclusion, for Greece had already produced several schools of skeptics; but the Greco-Roman world was so sodden with superstition that "progress" generally took the form of a new religion. A hundred religions offered their myths, and displayed their ritual, in the cosmopolitan cities of the Roman Empire. A hundred reformers, from Persia to Spain, groaned over sin and superstition, and formed little sects, in that age of purple and gold, to cultivate with them the chaste and austere virtue of the lily.

Jesus was one of these; and one of the most obscure. No authentic literature mentions him until nearly a century after his death. Hardly do we descry the slenderest outlines of his personality in the only literature about him which we can trust. We know that the rigid frame of Judaism had, like that of all other religions, yielded to the solvent of the new thought. There were still Pharisees, or Fundamentalists; but there were also Sadducees, liberal and humanitarian Rabbis like Hillel, eclectic philosophers like Philo, and ascetic rebels and purists like the Essenes and the Therapeuts. Out of the latter school emerges, very dimly, the form of the prophet of Nazareth, preaching no distinctive message except one —the approaching of the end of the world—which his modern followers are only too eager to disavow, sinking back into obscurity when he pays the penalty of his revolt.

Obscurity! Is his name not stamped upon a new era of world-history? Have not fifty generations of men bowed with awe and reverence at the mere sound of his name? Do not five hundred million people in this age of light and power proudly confess themselves his followers? What *can* you mean?

I mean precisely what I say. Jesus at his death sank back into the obscurity of the humbler folk of Galilee. His most ardent followers, even in the Gospels, returned to their nets. Ten years later a small group of ignorant men cherished his memory in Jerusalem. Thirty years later small groups of generally ignorant men and women held suppers in his name in a score of Greek and Roman cities. The new sect was one of the least successful, the least respected, of that sectarian world. What happened later. . . .

Yes, you say, precisely what happened later is the evidence to which I close my eyes. Out of that humble beginning God made the mightiest religion that ever was on this earth. Grant all the lowliness, the apparent poverty, of the commencement. Christianity, like Jesus, was born in a stable. Within a few centuries it lived in the palaces of kings. Christianity seemed a feeble and unpromising growth amongst the sturdy religions and philosophies of the time. Within five hundred years it commanded the allegiance of the world, and they were forgotten. It refused to temporize with any one of your creeds and philosophies; and your scholars can hardly discover their remains today when they sift the ruins of the past. It refused to temporize with the most powerful empire the world had yet known; and in a few centuries that empire was dead, and the world raised to its altars the tens of thousands of humble folk —slaves, women, even refined young girls—who had spat defiance at its tortures and perfumed that decaying world with the fragrance of their lives.

Quite so. That is the next part of my program. But let us proceed reasonably. Common sense says: Yes, a very wonderful religion, one of the most powerful in history, arose in the name of Jesus, but there might be many causes for its success. Common sense says that possibly Christianity made Jesus, instead of Jesus making Christianity. Common sense reminds you that there is hardly a point on which religious writings and sermons, which are so eager to make us truthful and good, tell the truth. We will approach this "triumph of Christianity" with an open mind; and first of all we will examine this wonderful body of saints and martyrs which is supposed to have given a unique glory and an irresistible power to the early Church.

Last night I passed through the chief park in the city of London, and I lingered for a few moments to listen to the orators in the open space near the gate. It is forty years since I first heard them, and the change that has come over the scene is remarkable. Even twenty years ago a tense, excited crowd gathered about two platforms: the Christian and the Atheist. Now there is Catholic Truth and Christian Evidence and heaven knows what; but the mass of the crowd gathers round two hoarse and horsy men who are selling infallible predictions for the next race. A couple of hun-

dred idle folk listen idly, coming and going, to Catholic Truth, and I stand on the fringe for a moment to hear it.

A callow youth, probably a clerk or grocer's assistant who reads pamphlets when he ought to be courting at the week-end, is giving London a learned and of course original dissertation on the grand old pun of Jesus to Peter: "On thee will I build my Church." I am for a moment tempted to paralyze him by asking him what he supposes the Aramaic word for "Church" is, or what Galileans of the time of Jesus would have made of the mysterious word (an interpolation of the second century). But I refrain. The answer would probably be that we have to trust the text of the Gospels as "the Church" would see that no false writings about Jesus would get into circulation!

These Catholic orators imagine ancient Judea—they seem to think that the Gospels were composed in Judea—to have been as sober and well organized as a section of Pennsylvania. They have the most weird ideas of ancient history, and they are forbidden to read accurate versions of it. Hilaire Belloc once, in conversation with me, expressed the opinion, in his customary dogmatic and scornful way, that Harnack was a fool. Let me turn over for you a page in the Migne (Roman Catholic) collection of the Fathers, which is better than many tons of sermons and pamphlets. I turn to a decree of a Council held in Rome under the presidency of the Pope. The editors have put it in the year 494 A. D., and they make the Pope Gelasius. But I agree with certain modern scholars who think that the Pope was Damasus ("the tickler of matrons' ears," as some of his priests called him), and that the Council was held between 370 and 380.

The Pope is nervous about the kind of literature which, even in the fourth century, and in Rome, is circulating amongst the faithful. Evidently—that is why it is impossible to put the Council back to 494—the educated pagans are making fun of "Catholic Truth." The decree says this. So the Pope and his clergy solemnly warn the faithful that a vast amount of spurious literature is current.

They even draw up a list of some of the books; and the Catholic who trusts the Gospels on the ground that "the Church" would guard the faithful against false literature will be surprised if he reads the list. It contains a score of spurious Gospels (there is one in the name of *each* of the apostles, besides our four), Epistles and Acts. Our four Gospels are just a selection out of a muddy stream of legendary literature; and "the Church" had let all this have a free run for at least two centuries (to the time of Constantine) before it made any protest. There was no control whatever of Gospel-writing. But by the fourth century the Church found it prudent to suppress wild stories about "the boyhood of Jesus" and picturesque accounts of "the midwife of Jesus," and so on.

From the second (or end of the first) century onward, therefore, the new religion was confessedly nourished on spurious literature. And the beginning of persecution opened to the forgers a new and magnificent field. Very rightly and naturally the early Christians treasured the memory and the remains of the few priests and many simple-minded maids and matrons who had died rather than forswear what they believed to be the truth. A particular church became—naturally again—proud of the number of its martyrs, of the beauty of their lives, of their "miracles," even of their noble birth or high position. And we have seen enough about this myth-making ancient world, from Judea onward, to find it just as natural that a legendary and utterly mendacious literature grew up to meet the Christian sentiment. If a church had no martyrs, it made them.

The spurious literature that existed in the fourth century is a mere trifle in comparison with the river of forgeries of the early Middle Ages. But it was serious enough to bring discredit on the Church. The "infidels," says the decree, are laughing at the Christians because their stories of martyrs are full of historical errors and patent absurdities. The Pope names, in particular, the accounts of St. George (who is still treasured by British Catholics), St. Quiricus, and St. Julitta, and says that they were probably written by heretics. He specifies a large number of spurious works, and he gives a general caution that many others are in circulation.

Incidentally, let us notice that the Pope includes in this first "index of prohibited books" that famous forgery, the letters of "King Abgar" to Jesus and of Jesus to King Abgar. And only a few years ago a priest of the Church of England had the effrontery to try to impose these spurious letters on his ignorant congregation as a recent discovery!

This list is generally called, as I have called it, an "index of prohibited books." But do not take the phrase literally. The faithful were not "prohibited," in the modern sense, to read the books. The books were condemned as false, as forgeries; but there were no penalties for reading them. And people not only continued to read them, but the forgers got busier than ever. The Roman Empire was sinking; and with it civilization was leaving the planet, except in China, for many centuries. The gloom of the Middle Ages was setting in. The educated free workers of the Roman Empire were succeeded by a besotted population of feudal workers of whom not one in a thousand could read. The literate minority even were so densely ignorant that the grossest forgeries could be imposed upon them. Those were the days when the voluminous collection of stories of saints and martyrs, of which the Catholic is so proud, emerged into the light of the new Europe.

The Protestant may impatiently say that he is not interested in the Catholic's saints and martyrs. He is, and he is bound to be.

All his literature boasts of the divine power that sustained the early Church in its conflict with the Roman Empire; and the details on which that boast is based are generally spurious. The modern, who cries a plague on both Catholic and Protestant houses, will, nevertheless, find a singular interest in the spectacle of a religion being imposed upon a world partly by means of the most extensive and audacious mass of forgeries that the world has ever known.

From the sixth century until the Reformation this mass of fraudulent literature circulated with impunity. Much of it was as grotesque as the legends which had circulated in the Roman world; but the educated minority of the pagan world had smiled at the legends, whereas the most learned men of the Middle Ages accepted the wild legends of the saints and martyrs. They paid, as a rule, no attention to history, to facts. The rage was theological speculation. What men like Abelard or Roger Bacon *might* have said of the legends—it is useless to speculate. It was not worth while to incur the fiendish tortures of the Inquisition by examining whether St. George had really fought a dragon, or St. Denis had carried his head in his hands.

During the Renaissance, of course, scholars smiled at these things. So did Popes, when they happened to be scholars; which was not often. It did not matter as long as you respected one very valuable set of forgeries: those on which the Temporal Power of Rome was based.

At last, when the darkness of the ages of faith began to be relieved by the slow dawn of modern knowledge, the Church got a few historical scholars; and the moment they turned their scholarship upon the stories of the early saints and martyrs, even the most Catholic of them put their fingers to their nostrils and closed them. There was Cardinal Baronius, Librarian of the Vatican Library, almost elected Pope, who in the year 1600 published an ecclesiastical history ("Annales Ecclesiastici") in thirteen folio volumes. It is by no means critical; it is intensely Roman Catholic. Yet when the learned Cesare had to weave the stories of the martyrs into the web of his history and came to examine the legends closely, his scholarly feelings revolted. A hundred years later, Father Pagi, a learned Franciscan friar, revised Baronius; and his pen itched even more than that of the Cardinal had done.

But the great slaughterer of the martyrs in those early days was M. Le Nain de Tillemont, a French priest of the second half of the seventeenth century. Tillemont was a good Catholic, but he was a good man and a very learned man. Moreover, the world had won a little freedom, and Tillemont was no ordinary priest, but a wealthy man, living on his estates, going from library to library to compare editions and manuscripts. Even Catholic scholars have now got a long way beyond Tillemont in criticizing the legends, but he did grand work, for his age. Strictly orthodox, of the Puri-

tanical Jansenist school, he had, nevertheless, a tinge of Voltairean humor and satire; and his criticisms of the stories of martyrs, though discreet, for he dreaded the censor, read entertainingly today. In fact, his "Memoirs to Assist the Ecclesiastical History of the Six First Centuries" (a curious slip, that, for a great scholar) appeared mainly after his death (1698). The work had just reached the age of the martyrs (Volume V) when he died. The remaining twelve volumes—I have just run through a beautiful old edition of them—cut the poor martyrs to bits once more, boiled them in oil, and buried the fragments.

The ordinary believer has a vague idea that it is only Rationalist critics, or at the most wicked Modernists, who strip the early history of the Church of these fragrant blooms of sanctity and martyrdom. He could not make a greater mistake. We saw that the criticism of the Old and New Testaments, the detection of forgeries and interpolations, has been conducted almost entirely by learned theologians. From the group of Rationalist critics (Robertson, Drews, Smith, Couchoud, etc.) I have, on purely historical grounds, derived nothing. No theological authority on it today would say less than old Tillemont; and there are few who would not say a great deal more. I am content to follow these religious writers.

About half a century after the death of Tillemont a scholar, Prosper Lambertini, was by some rare mistake on the part of the Holy Ghost, chosen to fill the See of Peter. Benedict XIV, as he was called, knew well that the sacred books of his Church, to say nothing of its popular literature, were full of lies; and he, being a scholar, did not like lies. It was a liberal age, and Prosper was almost a friend of Voltaire. The great French skeptic gracefully dedicated his "Mahomet" to the Pope; and the Pope gracefully defended Voltaire against a charge of writing bad Latin. Prosper more or less—a great deal less than more, for the clergy were ignorant and hostile—reformed the "Martyrology." You should read it today, and you will wonder how much it differed from "The Arabian Nights" before Prosper cut out the more daring myths! However, there remained the Breviary, with its short life of a saint for every day. Prosper directed a liberal Jesuit to report on it, for the purpose of reform; but when the bulky and ruthless report reached him, he sighed, and put it on the shelf. So the official books of the Catholic Church, the Breviary and the Missal, which the priest reads every day, are still full of what the Catholic scholar regards as lies and forgeries.

I beg his pardon. Of course he does not admit "lies" and "forgeries." I am putting my own rude language into his suave mouth. Read the modern Jesuit and Bollandist, Father Delehaye. The Bollandists are the Jesuit associates and successors of Bollandus who, in the seventeenth century, made a voluminous collection of

the "Acts of the Saints." And the modern Bollandists, and scores of Protestant theologians, dissect that body of fairy tales as cheerfully as butchers cut up sheep.

Let me give the Catholic reader one further illustration. He is permitted, even encouraged, to read the "Catholic Encyclopedia." Ordinarily I would not recommend any person to waste his time in that unentertaining and unprofitable way. The work is a tissue of inaccuracies, antiquities, and lies. But the truth about the martyrs is now so well known that even this egregious "Encyclopedia" has to admit a good deal of it. Look up, for instance, the article on St. George. "Remembering," says the Jesuit writer, "the *unscrupulous* freedom with which any wild story, even when pagan in origin, was appropriated by the early hagiographers to the honor of a popular saint," we have to be on our guard. That is a very rare morsel of Catholic Truth. Father Thurston tells you, coldly, that all that we know about St. George, the patron of England and for ages the most popular saint in Christendom, is that he existed, and that he was martyred in or near Lydda some time before 300 A. D. What a disillusion after the old story!

Even the most orthodox reader will recognize the force of the modern criticism of martyr-legends when so retrograde a work as the "Catholic Encyclopedia" is compelled to admit it. Usually its writers deny the most certain facts of science or history with an ease that must command the envy of a politician.

THE GENUINE PERSECUTIONS

You are, I hope, familiar with the traditional story. If not, let me for a moment imagine myself back in the pulpit—it makes my flesh creep—and tell it to you as, I suppose, I told it to an admiring thousand in my twenties.

By about thirty years after the death of Christ, after the disheartened apostles had returned to their fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee, the new faith had spread so triumphantly through the Roman world that the Emperor Nero, in his Golden House on the Palatine Hill, marked it and trembled. With all the might of Rome he flung himself upon the followers of Jesus. The most diabolical tortures were devised for them; and in their thousands, in every province of the Roman Empire, they went smiling to their atrocious deaths. But the blood of the martyrs was the seed of Christians. Twenty years later Domitian saw the hated religion overrunning the Empire, and again the decree went forth that it was to be "rooted out" of the planet. Thirty years later it had grown so miraculously that crowds came up to the tribunals in a single remote province of the Empire, and Trajan renewed the bloody attempt to extirpate it. Ten times in two hundred and fifty years the mighty forces, the fiendish tortures, the unquenchable hatred of Rome were set in motion against it; and refined maids of

high birth braved the lions and the shame which is worse than death (though less unpleasant), and mothers were torn from the arms of loving husbands, and . . . .

My sermon style has degenerated a little, I fear. But this is still the belief of the great majority of Christians: that ten times the scythe of the Roman power went bloodily through the whole Christian world, and ten times it raised again its proud head to heaven, until God, content with its heroic endurance, gave it peace. Orosius and Lactantius, the Christian historians of the fourth century, say so. Nero, says Orosius (Chap. vii), tried to eradicate the very name of Christian and hunted the faithful "through every province of the Empire." Domitian, he says, made the same effort to "root it out." And so on. Motive? The inspiration of the devil, of course. Result? To enrich the world with hundreds of thousands of martyrs, whose beautiful stories still bring tears to the eye . . . . And, sad to say, the cold historical truth is that we cannot admit more than two, or at the most three, "general persecutions." So Professor Gwatkin, the ecclesiastical historian of Cambridge University (England), sums up the matter in the authoritative "Dictionary of Religion and Ethics." We may be content with his verdict, and need not draw upon the more radical, and sometimes strained, criticism which reduces the persecutions still further. Decius and Diocletian, in the third and fourth centuries, set afoot general persecution. Valerian, in the third century, possibly did the same, in milder terms. The rest is mob-movements locally against the unpopular Christians.

Why Rome, one of the most tolerant of powers, persecuted will be made clear as we proceed. Each Emperor had his own reason for enforcing or supporting the law. The oldest Roman law, the Law of the Twelve Tables, forbade any man to practice any religion not formally admitted by the state. But the state was remarkably hospitable and admitted all kinds of religions. Christianity was detested mainly for three reasons. First, and from the start, because its meetings were secret, and generally by night; so they were put down as orgies if not conspiracies. Secondly, the Christians spoke with infinite scorn of the beliefs of their pagan neighbors, of the official deities of Rome. Thirdly, as time went on, because in proportion as the difficulties of the Empire increased, the Christians became increasingly disloyal, refusing service and almost exulting in its enfeeblement.

A number of competent modern scholars doubt if there ever was a persecution under Nero. We have serious reasons to think that there was. The passage in which the Roman historian Tacitus describes the persecution half a century later is strongly suspected of Christian adulteration. It speaks, not only of Jesus being crucified under Pontius Pilate, but of the martyrdom of "an immense multitude" of Christians at Rome. There were only a few thou-

sand (as we shall see) two centuries later, so the phrase is very doubtful. But the style generally of the long passage, the fearful hatred of Nero that spread through the Church, the red glow of some persecution in Revelation, the early claim that Paul (the martyrdom of Peter is generally rejected, and is not claimed until about 170) was beheaded at Rome, all point to a severe persecution. Let us take the familiar story. Nero, who was of unbalanced mind, was suspected of setting fire to Rome, so as to have the glory of rebuilding it. He turned the blame on the Christians and mercilessly punished them. But we have no reason whatever to think that he persecuted them outside Rome.

Now let us turn to the worthy Tillemont. He wrote his history in a singular way, with one eye on the censor and one on truth. The text of each chapter he composed out of fragments of more orthodox historians, such as Baronius. Then, at the end of each volume, he added a series of lengthy and destructive notes.

The first martyr of the Neronian persecution is St. Paulinus, and in his life there is a reference to "the Governor of Tuscany." Says Tillemont slyly: "We leave the learned to examine whether there were governors of Tuscany under Nero." Of course not; it is like mentioning Presidents of the United States under Queen Elizabeth of England. The life of Paulinus, Tillemont concludes, after examining it, is of unknown (but very late) age and no authority. Poor Paulinus. The next Roman martyr is St. Torpetus; and we are told that the account of him is "one of the worst pieces imaginable." The next is St. Vitalis; and the life of Vitalis is a ninth-century production, and "contains more words than facts." St. Ursicinus follows; and he also is under a cloud, for there has been a fatal confusion of names and the legend is valueless.

St. Hermagoras comes next to the block; and, as the seat of his martyrdom, Aquileia, is said to be "a town of the province of Austria" (which is very much like describing Mexico City in the sixteenth century as "a town in the province of Bolivia"), his head soon falls. Then we reach the very touching and beautiful tale of St. Thecla, which nuns still read with blushing admiration.

Thecla was a "very beautiful and very learned" (of course) pagan lady who was converted by Paul (the tent-maker), and her constant and tender companionship alleviated the burden of his apostolate. She took a life-vow of virginity; and, when the persecution broke out, the pagans thought it a relevant punishment to remove all her clothes before she was presented to the lions. But even the lions, Tillemont elegantly (with just a spice of irony) quotes from the legend, "did not dare to violate her virginity by too free a look." (She is said in the Roman Breviary to have been ninety years old.) So the lions—I mean on account of her vow—veiled their eyes, and licked her feet, and even the fire would not burn her, and so on. Tillemont ungallantly proves that the sources

of these stories are absolutely worthless, and that, according to the most reliable of the documents this "first lady martyr," as the Greek church calls her, died peacefully in her bed at an advanced age—if there ever was such a person.

Next for trial are Sts. Gervasius and Protasius; and this is really interesting. There came a time, in the fourth century, when St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, found himself in bitter conflict with the Empress, a Christian but an Arian. In order to inflame and sustain the zeal of the faithful, St. Ambrose (the story runs) was directed in a series of visions to dig in the ground and discover a number of bodies of the early martyrs. Thus came to light the precious bodies of Gervasius and Protasius; and such was the zeal of the faithful that Ambrose beat the Empress.

Tillemont fastens truculently on this story. The bodies were of a remarkable size, and Tillemont seems to wink as he notes Ambrose's explanation, that this at least proved them to be centuries old. Then, as now, people were supposed to be bigger "in the good old times." Further, no less a person than St. Augustine was *at that very time in Milan,* and he tells us that the bodies were miraculously "uncorrupted," whereas Ambrose tells us that he found only bones—which lets us see how myths grow. In the end Tillemont proves that the remarkable story of Gervasius and Protasius—strange that Ambrose knew even their names, he says—is built entirely upon spurious works attributed to Ambrose, and is quite worthless.

Tillemont does not venture to impugn Ambrose, though he makes a few nasty innuendoes. We need not be so diplomatic. Ambrose found an old cemetery and exploited it. "Gervasius and Protasius" were probably Goths from the north, or brigands from the mountains, who had been buried there. Their relics are still in great honor in the Church of Rome.

So Tillemont admits the Neronian persecution, but he annihilates every martyr (except Peter and Paul) he mentions in connection with it. I am not going to follow him through his ten volumes, but these terrible notes scratch the halos from saints and martyrs at the end of every volume. He next notices the famous "St. Denis the Areopagite." The story will not bear criticism, he shows. St. Domitilla, a martyr of noble birth, follows. A tissue of contradictions, says Tillemont; there is no proof that the lady was martyred at all. St. Linus and St. Clement, Popes and martyrs, fare little better.

In short, the learned and pious historian covers the first century of the Christian era, in which, according to Orosius and common belief, there were two fierce general persecutions; and he does not leave a single martyr's crown (except those of Peter and Paul, whom he dare not challenge) undamaged. And it is much the same in the second century. He throws serious doubt on or dilutes away

the stories of four out of five of the martyrs mentioned in his text.

He takes up the wonderful story of St. Caesarius. "I think," he drily concludes, "the safest way is to leave him in the number of those whose holiness we are acquainted with, but of whom we know nothing else." Of the story of St. Hyacinthus he unkindly says that it "looks very much like a fable." St. Eudocia's life is based upon "a very sorry piece," a piece of "mere fiction."

Then we get one of the big events of the calendar, the martyrdom of St. Romulus and *eleven thousand* Christian soldiers! This preposterous story moves the historian to wrath. It is, he says, "worthy of the Greek who wrote it." This audacious Greek, Metaphrastes, the greatest writer of martyr legends—lived in the tenth century!

So they come up for execution once more, one after the other. St. Evodius: no evidence that he died a martyr. St. Ignacius: story reeks with errors. St. Eustachius: a "mere romance." St. Sophia: record full of anachronisms. St. Eleutherius—here the good priest seems to be getting tired of it. Of Eleutherius he says that there is "no ground to assert that he was a martyr, or *even a man*." The story of the next, St. Babbina, is "outrageous language." The record of St. Symphorosa is spurious, full of errors. And so on.

The truth is that no man now knows how many or how few Christians were put to death by the Roman authorities. For every score of martyrs that Tillemont slays, the modern Bollandist Father Delehaye slays a hundred, and more independent critics may be said to slay a thousand.

Nero's persecution in Rome, if we admit it, was the work of a man whom all historians now regard as more or less insane; and Tacitus implies that it was not liked by the Romans themselves. Moreover, it is too often forgotten that "an immense number" of good pagans met their death under Nero. A later pagan writer composed a "martyrology" of the men and women who were victims of Nero's insanity; and it has been suggested that the Christians borrowed this model, if not many of the pagan names in the book.

Domitian, the next persecutor, also confined his action to Rome, and, as far as we can ascertain, only enforced the law against a number of prominent men who professed the illicit religion. And Domitian, again, was a "persecutor" of pagans as well as Christians; a man of sinister and gloomy character, living in an atmosphere of plots. The statement of the Christian historian Orosius, which is followed by every later Christian historian, that he tried throughout his Empire to "root out" the very name of Christ, is entirely false.

Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, who are counted as the third and fourth persecutors, were men of very different, and very high character. All the Stoic Emperors detested Christianity as a mean superstition and an anti-social philosophy. The Empire was labor-

ing, and a sect which cut off its members from civic and imperial life deserved no indulgence. They let the law stand—it is quite false that they issued persecuting decrees—and interfered little with the local passion which occasionally flamed out against the Christians. The only historical sign of any large persecution is the famous letter in which Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, asks Trajan's permission—that is the real purport of the letter—not to enforce the law. The authenticity of the letter is seriously disputed and some of the rhetorical passages in which Pliny describes the temples as deserted, and whole regions converted to Christianity, are quite inconsistent with the known facts. In any case, as Tertullian afterwards said, Trajan's reply "partly frustrated" the local passion.

Septimius Severus, the next persecutor, a hundred years after Trajan, is said to have been alarmed at the number of prominent Romans who became Christians and to have enforced the law to some extent. We have, however, very few accounts of genuine martyrs. The succeeding two Emperors were too vicious to persecute, and the next, Alexander Severus, actually put a bust of Christ in the private chapel of his palace. He was succeeded by Maximin, and the legends put thousands of martyrs under the "bloody tyrant." But, says the learned religious historian Professor Gwatkin, "We hear of no execution!"

Decius (249-251), Valerian (257), and Diocletian (303) were the only general and systematic persecutors. There is no doubt in the mind of any historian that in trying to suppress or check Christianity—at first in each case by the lighter penalties—they were consulting the welfare of the state, which was then sinking. Professor Gwatkin himself remarks that many of the Christians, so far from being willing to defend the Empire, were "half inclined to welcome the Goths and Persians as avengers." The Pope insolently and openly defied Valerian at Rome; and Diocletian's decrees were torn down by Christians in his own palace who relied on the protection of his womenfolk. Before Diocletian the Church had had forty years of peace, and it had grown sufficiently to make its anti-patriotic teaching a matter of concern. Yet in not one of the three decrees of Diocletian is the death sentence imposed.

THE MANUFACTURE OF MARTYRS

The work so auspiciously begun by M. Tillemont has been in modern times so zealously and effectively pursued that a martyr's crown or a saint's halo must now be worth less than a dollar even in the Church of Rome. Relatively few crowns remain on the historic heads. Indeed relatively few historic heads remain. In batches of from four or ten to twenty thousand the long-revered figures have melted into the nebulosity of popular legend or priestly strategy. And a large number of the martyr-figures which are retained as historical, shorn of their golden miracles, are retained on

grounds which a profane historian would deem insufficient for an honest affirmation.

For once the zealous Protestant rubs his hands at the work of the critics. *He* wants no saints and martyrs, no relics or statues, no legends or martyrologies. Let him thank the "higher critics" in this department that they have justified the work of the Reformation. But let him not be too hasty in his congratulations. In slaying the martyrs these modern historians have destroyed one of the time-honored arguments for the supernatural origin of Christianity, and in exposing this prodigious volume of untruthful literature they have given us proof of a tendency of the new religion which is far from complimentary to its ethic. Let me, as usual, first put before the reader as many facts as can be conveniently packed within narrow space. And, again in harmony with my usual procedure, I do not turn to extreme Rationalists or mythologists or psycho-analysts for my "facts." I am going almost entirely to rely on Catholic writers; and the little that I shall borrow from Protestants is endorsed by Catholic writers. Indeed, as I have already observed, the results of this modern criticism are so certain that even the very conservative "Catholic Encyclopedia" reduces hundreds of the more famous saints and martyrs of old to a mere formula and rejects the most treasured legends of popular Catholic literature.

The study of the lives or legends of saints and martyrs is now a science, hagiography (from *hagios*, or saint). It has engaged the labors of hundreds of first-class scholars for the last hundred years, and only a small minority of these have been Rationalists. Leading Catholic scholars like Mgr. Duchesne, leading Protestant scholars like Harnack, and scores of less prominent though more concentrated workers have joined in the search.

The conditions of modern life have made the task easier than it was in the days of Tillemont. One does not now lumber in a stage-coach from Tours to Paris to consult a library, or brave the terrors of the Macedonian hills or the Syrian deserts to see a manuscript that lies in the dust of an ancient monastery. Modern transport takes the martyr-slayer over the whole field in a month; and he then prints the new manuscript he has discovered in some sleepy Greek or Syrian monastery, and a hundred experts get to work on it.

The result may be seen in such a work as Dr. Albert Ehrhard's "Die altchristliche Literatur." Ehrhard is a Catholic, but he summarizes and entirely endorses the work of the critics. He gives the authors and titles of more than a hundred books and essays dealing critically with the martyrs. Neumann, he tells you, has made a special study of all the legends of martyrs under the Emperor Commodus, and has found the whole of them spurious except two or three. Führer has thoroughly studied what was thought to be the

sound story of St. Felicitas and her seven sons, and has shown that two quite different legends have been blended, so that the saint really only got her "seven sons" in the Middle Ages. Delehaye, a Jesuit, has made a special study of the martyrs of the Roman Church and has found that all the "Acts" of them—including such treasured memories as St. Agnes and St. Cecilia—are late compilations which do not even profess to quote earlier authorities.

Let me note here one particular result of this criticism which will amuse the reader. So deep-rooted is the belief that Christian martyrs were exposed to the lions in the Amphitheater (now called the Coliseum) of ancient Rome that even Bernard Shaw built upon the legend one of those plays ("Androcles and the Lion") in which he teaches us how to write history. It appears that twenty years before Mr. Shaw took up the theme, Father Delehaye had proved in his book "L'amphithéatre Flavien et ses environs" (1897) that no Christian was ever exposed to the lions in the Coliseum! I have not been able to consult the book, but the Catholic Dr. Ehrhard tells us this. The "acts of the martyrs" of the Roman Church in particular are amongst the most spurious of all. Yet Catholic writers continue to tell Catholic readers how Gelasius (or Damasus) warned the faithful not to read spurious books, and ask them to believe that the authorities of the Church were ever on the watch. On the contrary, as we shall see, Rome was the main center of the manufacture of spurious documents.

Duchesne particularly studied the martyrs of his own country, France, and few of them kept their crowns and halos. Ehrhard studied the Greek martyrs, and they melted one by one into myth. One man, Professor von Gebhardt, spent almost a lifetime in studying the "Acts of Paul and Thecla" and, says Father Delehaye, "the result shows us the fatal lot reserved for hagiographical documents which have long been esteemed." Professor Usener and others showed that pagan deities had been dressed up as Christian martyrs. Others took up the study of the "saintly" actors who, as pagans, refused to parody Christianity on the stage, and wiped out all their naughtiness of a long and happy life by martyrdom; yet one legend, which proved popular, was the basis of all the stories (St. Genesius, St. Gelasinus, St. Ardalion, St. Porphyrius, St. Philemon, etc.).

Father Delehaye's works are—if he will pardon the expression—even more entertaining. Never before was such ruthless devastation so cheerfully perpetrated. Father Delehaye sits in the middle of the field which is strewn with the corpses of the "martyrs" and he smiles as only a Jesuit can. Of course, you understand the smile. It is the smile of the tennis-player who has been beaten and wants to put a good face on it. It is to reassure, to retain Catholics. Nothing to worry about in the least, he says. We have to give up the old legends; but it was all very natural, and quite lovely and charming.

The learned Jesuit is a Bollandist; that is to say, he is a member of the permanent committee or association of Jesuit saint-describers of the Catholic Church who (under the lead of Father Bolland, of the seventeenth century) compiled the most monumental collection of saints ever put together. Up to the time when the French Revolution checked its pious work, it had published fifty-three enormous volumes, telling the stories of more than twenty-five thousand beautiful saints and martyrs. What other church or religion in the world could get together such a concentrated mass of fragrant holiness? When Gibbon elegantly observed of the work that "through the medium of fable and superstition it communicates much historical and philosophical instruction," white hands were raised to heaven. It was supernatural. Now we have the modern Bollandist pleasantly endorsing Gibbon. It was all quite natural. He insists on that: *because the only alternative today is deliberate deceit and forgery.*

Naturally we want to know how many genuine stories, how many accounts which on ordinary historical canons would be regarded as reliable, have survived this stupendous massacre of the martyrs. In most of the works of these hagiographers this most important point is evaded. No Catholic *dare* write a new "Acts of the Saints," with a proper respect for truthfulness.

I have not included any of my own modest efforts in the way of martyr-slaying; though the reader will find, if he cares, that in the earlier chapters of my "Crises in the History of the Papacy" I have exposed many. I have shown that Roman Popes who died comfortably in their beds (after equivocal lives) are honored as "Saints and Martyrs." I have shown that even anti-Popes and their supporters, slain by Christians in the bloody fights for the Papal throne (which I show in another book), are in the Martyrology. But I have preferred here to get together the admissions of Christian and Catholic scholars and help the reader to draw a few clear and sound inferences.

One point of primary importance is to ascertain what proportion of the martyrs survives the modern ordeal. You are never told that, but Father Delehaye's book enables you to form an idea. It is, surely, the gravest part of his work as an apologist, a Jesuit, to assure his Catholic readers that a sufficiently large number of the best known saints are described to us in genuine or nearly contemporary documents. Well, from that point of view his work is feeble and scanty. I will give my final conclusions here:

1. Less than one in one hundred of the "early martyrs" can be proved to have died for his religion or even existed in it.

2. Ninety-nine statements in one hundred, at least, in the lives of the martyrs are lies on somebody's part; and we can prove that the writers were almost always clerics.

3. The Christians, when they obtained power, made more

"martyrs" in a century than they had had in three centuries, and in the next one thousand years they made hundreds of times more martyrs than the Romans had made—if we include Jews, witches, Albigensians, etc., as we ought, *thousands of times more.*

No, no, says the Jesuit, gently, you must not use these harsh words. Stories of the martyrs were handed down, and such things grow naturally in the course of time. Then someone puts them on parchment, and they circulate. And copyists are careless, or they shift remarks on the margin into the text, or they feel that it is a work of piety and edification to touch up the narrative here and there. So the stories get into quite different versions in the east and the west, and the great legend-writers of the fifth and later centuries tried to blend different versions and insert every detail they found mentioned anywhere.

A very large part of this polite hagiographical talk is bunk: a mere cloak for Christian lying. Let us freely admit the large part due to the natural play of the imagination and to such alterations by copyists as we should not harshly call forgeries. But there is a limit both to the spontaneous enlargement of memory by imagination and to the "license of honest copyists."

Hagiographers will not elicit much sympathy from the modern world unless they use plain English. Father Delehaye does select a few, a very few, of the most extravagant medieval myth-makers and permits us to call them liars and forgers. For the others, since the charge would brand every section of both Latin and Greek Churches for several centuries, we are to use milder language even to admire their simple piety and zeal to edify the faithful. At one moment we are told that great martyr-describers like the Greek Metaphrastes always used some kind of manuscript source. At another time, when there obviously was no source, Father Delehaye wonders if the fabricator *meant* his story to be taken as a real account of the Martyr! One might as well "wonder if the Popes and bishops and priests, who saw these things taken literally all over Europe for a thousand years, *wondered* if people really believed them. Any man who questioned them was in danger of the stake.

CHAPTER XVI

How Christianity "Triumphed"

The Legendary Triumph—The "Conversion" of Constantine

The Legendary Triumph

IT was the year 312. All the blood of all the martyrs had converted only a small fraction of the Roman world, and a recent persecution had made apostates of ninety-nine in a hundred of those.

At that moment a fiery and unscrupulous, but very vigorous and ambitious man named Constantine, son of a rural barmaid who had dallied with a Roman officer, was leading a great army across Italy to meet his rival for the sovereignty of the world. Suddenly he saw, flaming on the heavens, the Greek monogram (the *labarum*) of Christ, and, as if to prevent any nonsense about an ocular illusion, the words: "In this sign thou shalt conquer."

As is common in the case of these stupendous and unmistakable miracles, Constantine did not fall on his knees, but merely wondered. A second vision, during the night, informed him that this monogram referred to Christ; with whose religion and followers he had been familiar for ten years at least. After these two miracles he opined that Christianity was worth inquiring into. He inquired, was converted; and the real Christian Era opened. At Christ in a manger Greeks and Romans had mocked. By an emperor in the purple, with the police and soldiers behind him, their eyes were opened.

First of all let us make quite sure that the triumph had not been substantially won, as ordinary believers think, and religious writers encourage them to think, before the conversion of Constantine. How many Christians were there in the Roman Empire in the first decade of the fourth century? That means, remember, nearly three hundred years after the death of Jesus, two hundred and fifty years after the supposed "immense multitude" of Christians (fertilized by the blood of martyrs) at Rome, and two centuries after Pliny is believed to have said that the temples were deserted in Bithynia.

This point is of very great importance and interest, and we are going to study it for ourselves. One reason is that the estimate is difficult, and the figures vary from five millions to fifty millions!

It is generally agreed that the population of the Roman Empire was at the time about one hundred millions, and I will set out here the estimates of the number of Christians among them that have been published by different historians who have made any sort of calculation:

Gibbon	5,000,000
Friedlander	5,000,000
Richter	6,000,000
Zockler	7,000,000
La Bastie	8,000,000
Chastel	8,000,000
Schultze	10,000,000
Keim	16,000,000
Matter	20,000,000
Staudlin	50,000,000

It must be difficult, mustn't it? As a matter of fact, it is not difficult to show that the larger estimates in this list, which are old and superficial guesses, are ludicrous, and even that the figure of five millions is too large.

Professor Bury, the most distinguished Roman historian in England and the very able editor of Gibbon's great work, generally agrees with Gibbon, but would put the figure higher at one time. As, however, he has made no personal study of the matter, I turn rather to the most recent and most scientific (or least unscientific) of all the estimates, that given by Professor V. Schultze, a Protestant scholar, in his "Geschichte des Untergangs des griechisch-römischen Heidentums" (2 vols., 1892).

Schultze makes a lengthy and detailed estimate of the number of Christians in each province of the Roman Empire; and, if you will take the trouble to tabulate the results (as he fails to do) and add them together, you will find a curious and significant thing. Apart from a few provinces where it is impossible to estimate the number of Christians, but where he admits that they were very few, his figures amount to three million six hundred and fifty thousand. He would not ask us to add more than one hundred thousand for all the rest of the Roman world. Yet he concludes that there were "at least" ten million Christians in the Empire at the beginning of the fourth century, and he further says that Keim's figure, sixteen million, is not too high! That is a nice sample of "religious statistics"; and Schultze was a distinguished professor and an expert.

But even the figure of three million, seven hundred and fifty thousand is too high. Having myself made a thorough study of the fourth century (see my "St. Augustine and His Age," "Crises in the History of the Papacy," "Empresses of Rome," etc.), I can check Professor Schultze's deductions, and we shall find that he is too optimistic, even in his lower figure.

For most provinces of the Roman Empire he finds the number

of bishops, and from this he estimates the number of the faithful. It is a delicate and treacherous method unless you know well the conditions of church-life in the fourth century. In my "St. Augustine" (pp. 195-7) I have shown that as late as the year 391, when Christianity was established by law and all other religions bloodily suppressed, the bishop of Hippo had only one church, with a few hundred worshipers, in a town of thirty thousand inhabitants, and that Augustine, who succeeded him, had not a single priest under him; yet because Schultze finds two hundred bishops in Africa about the year 310, he roundly estimates that there must have been one hundred thousand Christians. There is no known ratio of bishops and the faithful.

Now let us take Rome, where Schultze again finds one hundred thousand Christians (in a city of one million). We know that about the year 250, when the Church had enjoyed a long peace, Pope Cornelius had forty-six priests, fourteen deacons and sub-deacons, ninety-four lesser clerics, and fifteen hundred widows and poor to support. From this Schultze and most other clerical writers (except Harnack) argue that there were fifty thousand Christians in Rome in 250.

It would not be a monumental triumph, but, in point of fact, I have shown from the official "Calendar of the Popes" that until the year 220 the Roman Christians had not a single chapel of any sort; and to imagine that they had chapels for fifty thousand worshipers thirty years later is, in view of the stern law against them, absurd. As far as I can discover, they had only two.

Further, we learn from the Christian historian Optatus that in the year 310, when Schultze estimates their number at one hundred thousand, they had only forty small—very small—chapels. It would thus be more reasonable to suppose that at the outbreak of the Diocletian persecution they numbered about twenty thousand, and the persecution scattered them like chaff. Schultze's estimate of one hundred thousand Christians for the rest of Italy is even wilder. In the central and best educated part of the Roman Empire, Italy, which had a population of about ten million, the Christians numbered certainly not more than six hundred thousand and probably much less. Schultze admits that in the next best educated provinces—Greece, Spain, and southern Gaul—they were very few in number.

The Christians were mainly in the ignorant east, especially Asia Minor (which had a larger population then than now) and Armenia. Antioch was the greatest city of the east, and it had half a million inhabitants. Its famous bishop and orator, St. John Chrysostom, tells us that he had in it one hundred thousand followers about the year 385. This was after *seventy years of imperial favor,* under the fanatically Christian Emperor Theodosius and the greatest orator of the Christian world. I would add that the

figure is (as religious writers forget to say) a mere guess. What John really says, in a sermon in which he has every reason to exaggerate, is: "*I believe* we reach the number of a hundred thousand." In any case, we can safely assume that seventy years earlier even at Antioch, the heart of eastern Christendom, there were not more than fifty thousand Christians.

In short, it is liberal to grant, in the year 310, three million nominal Christians amongst the hundred millions of the Roman Empire; and the persecution had driven most of these back to the temples. Moreover, the vast majority were in rural Armenia (to which Schultze assigns no less than two million out of his three million seven hundred and fifty thousand), Syria, and Asia Minor. The gospel, after nearly three centuries of propaganda, was a failure.

Hence we will not linger over the many pretty and ingenious theories of "the spiritual triumph" of Christianity, but the reader will expect a word about the five causes assigned by Gibbon in the famous fifteenth chapter of his "Decline and Fall":

1. The inflexible zeal of the Christians.
2. The definite Christian doctrine of a future life.
3. The miracles claimed by the Church.
4. The pure and austere morals of the faithful.
5. The unity and discipline of the Christian Republic.

The reader may understand at once that Gibbon's speculations are due entirely to the imperfect condition of scholarship in his time. "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" is not only the most elegantly written historical work that ever appeared, but it is for its age a model of conscientious industry and critical insight. Parsons who now jibe at its "errors" would do well to compare it with *clerical* works of the eighteenth century.

But our knowledge of the ancient world was at the time a mere legacy from the Middle Ages. Even Egyptologists had not begun their revelations; and Babylon—nay, even ancient Rome itself—still lay under the rubbish which a thousand years of semi-barbarism had heaped upon them. Nothing was known about "the pure and austere morals" of half a dozen sects besides the Christian, or about the equally sure and certain hope of immortality which they offered to the pagan world. The vast library of lies and forgeries about the martyrs had as yet admitted only a few tremulous rays of truth; and Gibbon, in admiring the "inflexible zeal" of the Christians, was quite unaware that for every genuine martyr, voluntary or involuntary, a thousand Christians had offered incense to Zeus or bribed officials to certify that they had done so. The "miracles" were, we now see, not even known to the Christians themselves of the first three centuries. They are almost entirely the work of unscrupulous later ages.

This disposes of four of the five causes; and the fifth cannot

have been taken seriously by the historian himself. He would, of course, not know that there was just as much "discipline" amongst the Mithraists and Manichaeans, the worshipers of Isis, and the devotees of the Greek mysteries. But he did know that instead of being "one," the Church was bloodily rent by schisms and heresies; that, instead of being a republic, its constitution was intensely autocratic by the third century; and that what it had of unity and discipline was precisely what annoyed the Romans and moved good emperors to persecute it.

We understand Gibbon, but we can make only the excuse of culpable ignorance for religious writers who in our time find "causes" of the miraculous spread of Christianity. One of the most popular and most mendacious of these is the claim that it was unique in welcoming the slave and the woman on equal terms. This was done by the Mithraists, the Manichees, the Stoics, and the religious trade-organizations (or Colleges). And it is equally untrue that the Christian body attracted by its virtues—the sermons of the Fathers are one long indictment of its vices—or would be likely to attract the ignorant masses of the Roman world, who formed the great bulk of its adherents, by such an expensive advertisement.

There is no miracle or marvel to be explained. In three centuries the new religion may have won three million followers. The old Roman, Greek and Asiatic religions were in decay, discredited by their own thinkers. It was the easiest thing in the world to ridicule the old Polytheism. A very large number of people were ready for alternatives. From St. Augustine we gather that the Manichaeans were at least as numerous as the Christians. Modern experts on Mithraism say that it was even more prosperous. It was adopted by emperors before Christianity was. A period of evolution had been reached when new religions were bound to spread, and historical parallels are abundant. One instance will suffice: In the nineteenth century Spiritualism won three million people (out of forty millions) in the United States in ten years, whereas it took Christianity nearly three centuries to reach that number in a world of gross ignorance and superstition. The spread of the Albigensian heresy in the Middle Ages was even more rapid and complete.

The growth was chiefly in the third century, and there was a special reason for this. Incessant war had very greatly impoverished the empire, and the Christians of the cities, where they had a few rich adherents, made charity a very important part of their work. The church at Rome supported fifteen hundred widows and indigents in the middle of the third century. The Church at Antioch maintained three thousand in the fourth century. The Romans were accustomed to parasitism by their own vicious system, and they appreciated this gospel of charity.

On the whole, however, there was no growth that is historically unusual or puzzling. That is the main point. Friedlander, who was one of the most thoroughly informed writers on Rome, though his study of this point is slight, says that, before Constantine, the Church won one-twentieth of the empire. Schultze, who has made the least superficial estimate, says one-tenth; but his *figures* amount to less than one-twentieth. The only problem is: How was the four or five percent converted into one hundred percent?

The "Conversion" of Constantine

Let us for a moment consider the dear old *labarum:* one of the most profitable miracles that the hand of God, or of his earthly representative, ever achieved.

It is Eusebius, the bishop of Caesarea, who tells us of the miracle in his "Life of Constantine"; and you ought not to doubt it for a moment, because he says that he heard it from the Emperor's own lips! We will not, however, waste time in psycho-analytic research. I do not think that any ecclesiastical historian today believes in the vision, or even suggests an ocular illusion. All other historians smile at it. The *labarum* is as discredited as Catherine's wheel.

"The father of ecclesiastical history," as Eusebius of Caesarea is unhappily called, wrote his famous Ecclesiastical History some years before the death of Constantine; and it does not contain this very important miracle. When the emperor died, however, the bishop wrote a most untruthful and eulogistic "Life of Constantine," and in this he tells the story of the *labarum.* He tells us also that his chief business as a writer is to "edify"; which means, to advertise the Church. So modern historians are discreetly reticent about the zealous and courtly bishop. I will, as usual, supply the word which they leave unspoken. Eusebius was a liar. The other great Christian writer of the time, Lactantius, is by no means a model of veracity. But he merely says that Constantine saw the vision in a dream. The *labarum* appears on coins soon after the conversion of Constantine, but no one pretends that it was a reality except Eusebius.

This conversion of Constantine is one of the unsolved, or imperfectly solved, problems of history. Thousands have written on this event, which certainly changed the history of the world, yet there is no agreement whatever. The emperor was not baptized until the shadow of death fell upon his path. Years after his supposed conversion he used language ("the divinity in the heavens above") which any educated pagan would use. No one knows his real beliefs; any more than we know the beliefs of Napoleon. But we will not attempt here to discover them. He *adopted* Christianity, and that was the beginning of its triumph.

Constantine was, as I said, the illegitimate son of a rural barmaid and a Roman officer. The educated Romans always hated and despised him, and they do not conceal his birth. St. Ambrose, in fact, tells it. His father Constantius was an officer of distinction in the Roman army, and a robust tavern-wench, afterwards dignified with the name of Helena, in an outlying rural province of the empire, caught his soldierly fancy. She was so fortunate as to become the mistress of one who was destined for the purple; and, as if Providence did not deem that enough, her purblind generosity to the clergy earned in time for the Bithynian barmaid—a profession next door to that of courtesan—the chaster halo of the saint.

In Constantine the blood of the peasant-girl counted for more than that of Constantine the Bloodless (as his name means), and the aged Emperor Diocletian regarded him with some anxiety. But the political circumstances here throw more light than miracles do on the course of events, and I will explain them as briefly as possible.

When that fine old Roman, Diocletian, had reorganized and pacified the empire he chose a colleague, Maximian Hercules, to assist him in ruling it, and he raised to the rank of Caesars (princes with some hope of succession) Galerius and Constantius. Galerius was a somber and zealous adherent of the old religion, and it is said that it was he who egged Diocletian on to persecution of the Christians; though Diocletian never urged the death-sentence for religion, in spite of revolt and insolence and even arson in his own palace.

Constantius, on the contrary, seems to have been an easy-going and more or less cultivated man. He believed, with the Greek and Roman philosophers, in one god whose reality was figured or caricatured in all the deities of the Roman religion; and there can be little doubt—indeed, it is clear—that he transmitted his mild philosophy to his son Constantine. But Diocletian sent Constantius to rule Gaul and Britain, and kept the son in the east. When, in 303, Diocletian began to persecute, Constantius evaded the application of the decrees in his provinces. There were few Christians in them, and he could see no menace whatever in their peculiar beliefs and practices. His leniency became known throughout the Church, and the Emperor Galerius suspected that there was a political aim in his protection of the Christians. Diocletian and his colleague had abdicated in 304, and Galerius, now promoted to be emperor in the east, with Constantius as emperor in the west, prevented the young Constantine from obtaining the rank of Caesar.

I will not drag the reader through the details of the bloody civil wars that followed upon this multiplication of ambitions, but the question of sparing or favoring the Christians of the empire now became, to use modern language, a plank in the politi-

cal platform. Religious writers affect to see in this a confirmation of their very large figures of the number of Christians. It proves nothing of the kind. In a contest which seems fairly even and uncertain the support of any fanatical minority is useful. Moreover, there was the air of political wisdom which a man might have in proposing to put an end to religious dissensions in the hard-pressed empire. It would appeal to educated pagans.

Constantine escaped and joined his father in Britain; and very shortly afterwards the father died, and his troops acclaimed Constantine emperor. Ferrero, the latest student of the period, believes that the young Constantine engineered this *coup*, and it is the kind of thing he would do. Galerius, however, refused to recognize the election, and he made Constantine a Caesar. There was then a series of civil wars with which I need not complicate this sketch. In 310 Constantine beat and strangled the old Emperor Maximian, whose daughter Fausta he had married; and in 312 (the *labarum* year) he set out for Rome to try his strength against his brother-in-law Maxentius.

This complicated quarrel put an end to the persecution. Galerius had died of cancer in 311, but some months before he died he withdrew his persecuting decrees and addressed the Christians in quite amiable terms. We are told, of course, that as a last resort he was turning to Christ to heal his cancer. Moreover the Emperor Maxentius in Italy, against whom Constantine was advancing, also thought it prudent to disarm the Christians who were likely to do anything in their power to aid Constantine. He granted full liberty of conscience. These were the circumstances when, in 312, Constantine led his legions into Italy and was "converted" on the march. Maxentius was beaten. Constantine, now emperor, met his co-Emperor Licinius at Milan and together they issued a formal edict recognizing the freedom of the Christians.

This famous Edict of Milan was not, as is commonly said, the first chapter of liberty. The Christians were already free, except that the Emperor Maximian still persecuted in the east; though he in turn was killed in 313. Constantine, in the next year, attacked and beat Licinius, but he continued to share the empire with him for nine years, when, at the close of a fresh struggle, he had him treacherously murdered. Let me add here that three years later again, in 326, Constantine had his wife Fausta, his illegitimate son Crispus, and his nephew, murdered in his palace at Rome. Clerical writers try in vain to shift from him the guilt of these new crimes. The evidence is overwhelming. It is clear that the illegitimate son of the illegitimate Constantine was guilty of some outrage in regard to his beautiful and refined step-mother, and in a blaze of temper Constantine ended their lives.

It is in the light of these events that we have to judge, if we wish to do so, the character and "conversion" of Constantine. He

remained the head—Pontifex Maximus, or Sovereign Pontiff—of the old Roman religion until he died. He in 321 ordered the *auspices* (or religious diviners) of the pagan religion, against whom he had issued a severe decree, to make their exploration of the entrails of birds as usual if the palace were struck by lightning. In the following year he instituted the Sarmatian Games, with the usual religious (pagan) accompaniments, to the scandal of the Christians. In 330 he ordered the closing of two of the gayest temples of Aphrodite in the east; and they were either not closed or were reopened at once. Some of his coins represent him in the robe of the Pontifex Maximus, and pagan orators addressed him as if he were one of themselves. He, in fine, deferred his baptism (by water—he was amply baptized in blood) until the approach of death recommended to him this easy method of obliterating his crimes; and after death, the pagans elevated him, as was customary, to the rank of a divinity.

On the other hand—and this is all that concerns us—he established the principle of persecution of the old religion, and his massive generosity to the Church lifted it in twenty years to a position of which it had never dreamed. Was he a Christian? Was he, as the pagan historian Zosimus says, an adherent of the old religion (in his father's way) until the scorn of Rome for the murder of his wife and son drove him entirely into the arms of Christians? Or was it, until the end, merely a policy of creating a very powerful organization, intensely attached to himself, out of the Christian body? I choose the last alternative.

But it remains to tell what he did for the Church, for this is the real foundation of the triumph of Christianity. By the beginning of the year 311 the Church must have been smaller and more depressed than it had been since the first century. The few hundred who were prepared to die for the faith had been martyred. The great majority had concealed whatever faith they had under a profession of paganism. It was mainly in the rural districts of the east that any large number still clung to the religion of Jesus.

Constantine probably overestimated the number of Christians in Rome, Africa, and the east. He had lived six years in Britain and Gaul, and he knew the extent of the sect only from the exaggerated language of the pagans themselves. We must constantly bear in mind that in those days there were no statistics. Long afterwards, as I have said, St. John Chrysostom had no accurate knowledge of the number of the faithful in his own "parish," which was the best organized in Christendom. Every writer of ancient times who speaks about the number of Christians merely gives us an impression of little or no value.

Upon this scattered and dejected Christian world of the year 311 there then came, in succession, the news that Galerius had suppressed persecution and was dying of cancer; that Constantine,

whom rumor regarded as a patron and deliverer, was on his way to Rome to seize the throne; and that Maxentius, the actual ruler of Italy and Africa, had been forced to grant them full liberty. Certificates of pagan orthodoxy were cheerfully burned, and the faithful returned to the foot of the crucifix. Next year came the news of Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge; and in 313 the formal charter of liberty was signed by Constantine and Licinius at Milan.

But Constantine immediately went beyond this declaration of religious neutrality and evinced an attitude of what is now called benevolent neutrality. In the same year, 313, he exempted the Christian clergy from municipal offices. In the Roman administration these local functions, so far from being paid, were extremely costly and onerous to the citizens who were compelled to discharge them, and there was a very general attempt to evade them. Exemption was regarded as so valuable a privilege that the Christian clergy now discovered a remarkable number of "vocations" to their body, and great disorder ensued in the municipal administration, I leave it to the Catholic historian Count Beugnot ("Histoire de la déstruction du paganisme," I, 78) to estimate the result:

> The effect of this measure was soon felt. On all sides one saw crowds of people make for the churches who were moved not so much by conviction as by the hope of reward; and this first favor granted to Christianity admitted to its bosom guilty passions which had hitherto been foreign to it, passions which had speedy and pernicious consequences. The complaints of the municipal bodies and the disorder that followed in the administration of the provinces soon compelled Constantine to modify the privilege.

This, in fact, was Constantine's invariable experience when he listened to clerical suggestions of legislation in their favor. The anger of his solidly pagan empire compelled him to withdraw it. In 319 he issued a savage decree that any *auspex* who entered the house of a citizen should be burned alive, though the *auspices* might continue to function in the temples. It is said that the aim of the decree was to prevent the fraudulent exploitation of the citizens by private fortune-telling for money, but, as Beugnot observes, the real aim was a deadly blow at the old religion by making impossible the assumption of its offices. Two years later Constantine was forced to modify, or virtually repeal, his law, and it was probably never applied.

In the same year, however, he tried to impose the Christian Sunday as a day of rest on his Empire. How stupid or ignorant is the idea that the Christian Church brought a great boon to the Roman worker with its one day's rest out of seven. The Romans rested on the Thursday (Thor's or Jupiter's Day—*Dies Jovis*), and, as I said, they had more than a hundred holidays in addition in the year. Constantine's aim was, as in his previous measures, to

enforce Christianity. Again, however, he failed, and he had to modify his own decree.

Then came the dreadful year 326, when he, in the very heart of the empire, murdered his son and daughter. In my "Empresses of Rome" (1911) I have carefully analyzed all the original authorities in regard to the character of Helena, the illegitimacy of Constantine (which Gibbon chivalrously denied), and these murders. Constantius *could not* validly marry Helena in Roman law. As to the murders—of a son, wife, and a young nephew—the evidence is so clear that no one but a Roman Catholic historian now doubts it. There is further evidence of a respectable kind that Fausta was barren, that the three sons of Constantine were born of his mistress Minervina, and that she also was murdered at some time. Anyone who cares to consult my book, which is throughout based upon the Latin and Greek writers of the time, will see that the pagan empresses, up to the end of the fourth century, were as a rule reputable women; and that with the conversion of imperial ladies to the new religion we enter upon a story of intrigue, passion and vindictiveness which is far more picturesque. The contrast is even more marked in my "Empresses of Constantinople."

The Greek historian Zosimus tells us that after the murders at Rome the emperor applied for purification in the temple of Jupiter, and, the pagan priests sternly refusing, he turned to the Christian priests, who consented. This is fable, but it embodies a fact. Rome, which was still overwhelmingly pagan, drove out the emperor with its scorn and indignation. He was a barbarian. Christianity received him, at least more intimately than before. He went to Asia Minor, and there he converted the old town of Byzantium into a new capital of the empire, Constantinople. H. G. Wells, whose treatment of the pagan nations is deplorable, expatiates on the profound strategical wisdom of forming a second capital in the east. It is true that the plan had been decided, and the work begun, before 326. But the chief motive was the scornful opposition of Italy to his religious designs, and the determination to create a new and wholly Christian Empire. When Constantine found pasted on the gate of his Roman palace an inscription which I may translate,

> Say ye the Golden Age of Saturn dawns again?
> Of Nero's bloody hue these jewels are,

he fled. Fausta was a very beautiful and, as Julian himself tells us, most refined and virtuous lady, and she was only thirty-four or thirty-five years old at the time her husband murdered her. It is clear from the historians that Helena, his Christian mother, stung him into committing the murder; and it is highly probable that Fausta had justly accused his son and so incurred the fierce anger of Helena.

From the first Constantine had, apart from his unsuccessful decrees, showered wealth and privileges upon the Church. A stream of gold flowed from the palace, and new churches, of a more attractive nature, began to rise. At court and in the army the best way, if not the only way, to secure promotion was to become convinced by the brilliant evidence of the religion. Even ordinary citizens were rewarded with a baptismal robe and a piece of gold. Villages were raised to the rank of cities if all their inhabitants exchanged Jupiter for Christ. In ten years imperial gold had done more than the blood of all the martyrs, the miracles of all the saints, and the arguments of all the apologists.

Except that wealth continued to reach the Roman clergy, the progress of the Church in the west was now suspended. The city of Constantinople was dedicated in 330. The world had at least a Christian metropolis; and it was a superb city. Already, as I said, more than three fourths of the Christians were in the ignorant east, and they were now encouraged to attack pagan temples and openly ventilate their scorn. Few pagans could get advancement in the east. Constantine had lost all his vigor and clear wit. Dressed in effeminate robes, laden with jewels, crowned by a mass of false hair, he sat amongst the women and priests who now "converted" the world by means of his money and favors. Only now and again did the old anger burst, when the quarrels which rent the Church, from Africa to Mesopotamia, showed him how futile was his dream of a spiritual empire or, as Napoleon would later say, a spiritual gendarmerie. But he had chosen; and he had opened a new chapter of the human chronicle. He was baptized, and died, in 337.

CHAPTER XVII

The Evolution of Christian Doctrine

The Religion of Jesus—The Mists of Gnosticism—Fights Over Formulae—The Evolution of Priestcraft

The Religion of Jesus

THE primary educational need of America is to persuade believers to examine candidly the bases of their belief. The amiable counsel which statesmen give, to abandon strife and coöperate in enjoying the movies, is like a medieval recipe for a tumor; while the complaints of priests against the stirrers of sectarian conflict are prompted by a desire to keep their flocks in ignorance and pursue their secret activities unperceived. Far more healthful is the open battle. But the first condition of it is to enable the Fundamentalist to conduct it without rancor, bitterness or fierceness; because the really fundamental issue is whether what he takes to be the Word of God *is* the Word of God.

He would have us return to "the religion of Jesus," and we merely ask that we shall be quite sure that what he offers us *is* the religion of Jesus. A story is told of a Fundamentalist preacher assuring an agonized mother that the soul of her dead child would burn in hell forever because the boy had not been baptized. It does not matter whether the story is correct. It represents the actual belief of millions of Fundamentalist Christians. Well, where did Jesus say that? He was himself not baptized until he was thirty; and there is not a word in the Gospels that can be twisted by the most resolute theologian into a statement that a child, or even an adult, will be damned if he leaves the world unbaptized.

It is an inference, an implication, you say. All men have incurred the general sentence of damnation for Adam's sin, and the application to each person of Christ's redemption of the race is through baptism. Where did Christ say that? We have proof positive that the formula of baptism at the end of Matthew was fraudulently added to the Gospel when a priesthood was created; and even in that passage not one word is said about baptism as a condition of salvation.

But let us take a much broader view. The Modernist says that Jesus "saved" men, or helped them to save themselves, by his moral teaching and example. The Fundamentalist, scorning what

he calls this *modern* weakening of the Gospel message, says that Jesus was God, and had taken flesh and died on a cross chiefly to remove the primitive curse from the race. With any Fundamentalist who may hold that men and women of entirely virtuous lives, or who sincerely repented, would nevertheless have been damned forever because of a sin committed some thousands of years ago, if Christ had not died, I should not care to argue. In any case orthodox Christian teaching, Catholic and Protestant, is that a divine victim was sacrificed primarily to avert the general condemnation of the race for Adam's sin.

Where does Jesus say that? Where does he say that all men are condemned because of Adam's sin? Where does he say that God alone could atone for it? Where does he say that that is his purpose? Where does he say that he is, not the "son of God," but God? Let a Fundamentalist go very carefully through the Gospel of Matthew, as I have (for the hundredth time) just done, without a preacher to befog him, without any of his literature. He will realize a strange thing: that it is the Modernist who is nearest to "the word of God." The Modernist is the real follower of Jesus. The Fundamentalist is a follower of Paul.

This distinction is so marked that one of the most notable theological works of recent times—Dr. Machen, of the Theological School at Princeton, thinks it "epoch-making," though he does not agree with it—holds simply on a study of the contents of the Gospels and Epistles themselves, that Paul had never heard of Jesus! I do not myself agree with this brilliant writer, Bousset. But the notable point is this: the contrast of the teaching of Paul with the teaching of Jesus is so glaring that a Christian scholar of great distinction and authority can hold that Paul never heard of Jesus. And Fundamentalism is based on Paul.

Let us look for ourselves to the Gospels for the teaching of Jesus; and it will suffice to take Matthew, which is understood to be the most complete record of his words.

His teaching is almost entirely ethical. There are only just a few incidental phrases that can be called theological. Paul was "the first theologian," as Harnack says. Jesus believes in God, and says that he must be worshiped in spirit only, not in temples and synagogues, not with the aid of priests or ministers. This God will punish sin with eternal torment—that is to say, *personal* sins; Jesus never mentions an inherited sin of Adam—and reward virtue with eternal bliss. Jesus believes in devils and angels, which the Jews had taken over from the Babylonians and Persians. He believes that the end of the world is near, and that God will then judge all men for their personal sins.

No one will question that this is a full summary of the religious content of ninety-nine percent of the teaching of Jesus in the Gospel. That alone is significant. If the modern Christian

wants to find support in the Gospels for his beliefs, he has to search for short and incidental phrases, the meaning of which is always disputed, and the authenticity generally denied.

And this evidence of the lateness of the teaching that is attributed to Jesus is nowhere clearer than in one of the most famous texts of the New Testament. The writer, obviously a Roman, actually attributes a pun to the ultra-solemn prophet of Nazareth: "Thou art Peter [Rock], and upon this rock I will build my church." The Roman Catholic stakes his faith on that pun; and, if the Protestant admits that Christ used the words, his answer is worthless. The word is used again in Matthew xviii, 17, where a man who has a quarrel with his neighbor must submit it to "the church."

Jesus certainly never used the word. Apart from his expectation that the end of the world was at hand, the word had no meaning, as an institution, at that time; except that to a Greek it meant the political assembly or convocation. The Greek word put in the mouth of Jesus is *ecclesie*. The only Aramaic word corresponding to this meant the general assembly or convocation of the Jewish people. In that sense the word is used by the Greek translators of the Old Testament (Deut. xxxi, 30 and Ps. xxii, 22). It had no meaning whatever as a religious institution until decades after the death of Jesus. In the year 30 A. D. no one on earth would have known what Jesus meant if he had said that he was going to "found" an *ecclesie*, or church, and that the powers of darkness would not prevail against it, and so on.

The Gospels are late, and there are still later interpolations in them. In the circumstances it must seem strange to everyone that the writers *never* make Jesus plainly claim that he is God; and I may add that Paul only does this once, in a disputed passage, and that other early Christian writings are just as shy of saying in plain language that Jesus was God.

You may say that it comes to the same thing when Jesus claims to be, or at least admits the title, "the Son of God." It is so far from being the same thing that, if Jesus had plainly stated that he was God, it would have saved the Church three or four hundred years of bloody strife. "Son of God" meant to the Jews a man dear to God. What they regarded as blasphemy was the supposed claim that Jesus was *the*, or only, son of God. The English Bible says throughout "*The* son of God," but the Greek text of the Bible does *not*. In most cases the Greek—I have it before me—is simply "son of God," without an article. And if in other cases we have the full phrase "the Son of God" or "Son of Man," who will come one day on the clouds to judge all men (the most characteristic belief of the Persians), this is contradicted over and over again by other texts. "Why callest thou *me* good? There is none good but one, that is God" (Matthew, xix, 17). "Not as *I*

will, but as *thou wilt,*" Jesus prays to God (*Ibid.*, xxvi, 39); and "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken *me?*" (*Ibid.*, xxvii, 46). I could fill a chapter with such texts.

The Gospels are a tissue of contradictions on what the Fundamentalist says is the fundamental point, the divinity of Christ. The Church flamed with controversy about it. Even the experts, who carefully analyze the Gospels into their earlier and later elements, are in hopeless disagreement as to the simple point, which is at the basis of Christianity, whether or not Jesus claimed to be God.

And the second "fundamental" is, as I said, not even obscurely hinted at in the Gospel. Near the end, in one of the most suspected passages, Jesus is made to say that his blood is to be shed "for many, for the remission of sins" (Matthew xxvi, 28). This is so novel, so much at variance with the whole previous teaching of Jesus, that we rightly suspect it. But in any case, it is not a reference to "original sin." *There is not a single word in the Gospel* about redemption or atonement as it is taught by both Catholic and Protestant Churches, and is said to have been the essential reason for the incarnation! To see if I am not right, I turn back to the ponderous manual of "Dogmatic Theology" which I used in college decades ago, and it confirms me. Two vague references to sin or sins in John (a worthless witness in any case) are all that can be added to the text I have given. It is Paul, not Jesus or the Gospel writers, who gave the Church the doctrine of the atonement. Jesus was the first Modernist. Paul was the first Fundamentalist.

After nineteen hundred years, during one thousand of which the greater part of the genius of the race was devoted to this work, the most learned theologians of the world are hopelessly disagreed as to what Jesus did, what he said, and what he meant. The cocksureness of each new writer or new school, the confidence in them of their readers, the way in which a simple Christian tells you that "this has been explained," or "that apparent contradiction has been reconciled," are merely amusing. There is no other theme in the world on which the "experts" have produced a more voluminous and more contradictory literature than on that which the preacher calls the simple and sublime message of Jesus to man; and the confusion is now far worse than ever. I defy any man to indicate one other point on which the experts have, during the last hundred years, uttered such an infinite medley of contradictions.

When we turn from Jesus' elementary creed to Paul, it is like passing from some pleasant California valley to the cactus-covered rugged slopes of a Mexican gorge. The two things which even the Gospel writers, at the end of the first century, never put in the mouth of Jesus—the two things which are the real bases of Christianity, since they explain Christ and the incarnation—

are precisely the two main themes of Paul. I mean original sin and the atonement for original sin. Theologians often say that the Church turned away from Paul in the second century. What an extraordinary lack of sense of proportion! Paul's three characteristic doctrines—original sin, divine atonement for original sin, and the need of "grace"—which are not in the Gospels, are the foundations of the sacerdotal fabric that was raised and also of the doctrinal system of later Protestantism.

Why this extraordinary contrast between the Gospels and the Epistles? As I have already said, modern theologians realize it so acutely that the latest fashion is to follow Bousset, in his "Kyrios Christos" (1913), and say that Paul never heard of Jesus, but got his doctrine of "the Lord" and redemption from Greek and Mithraic sources. Dr. Machen in his "Origin of Paul's Philosophy" (1921) tells us that Bousset is forming a new and important school. Most writers say, however, that the messianic ideas, blended with Greek ideas, of the Jews scattered over the Mediterranean world would supply Paul with every element of his gospel. Others . . . . In short, every expert differs from every other expert. Machen's book is only one more proof of the utter uncertainty and transitoriness of every theological theory.

THE MISTS OF GNOSTICISM

It seems to me that you must reject the whole of the Epistles if you doubt whether Paul ever heard of Jesus of Nazareth. Even the least disputed of them (Romans, Galatians, and I and II Corinthians) talk of Christ Jesus, who was born of a woman, was crucified to redeem men from sin, and rose from the dead.

Paul at first cried blasphemy, but this story of Jesus would, on reflection, seem increasingly like a realization of his hopes. If only it were true that, as they claimed, this Jesus had risen from the dead! If only he would appear to Paul! Then, in some prolonged fit of brooding and fasting, Paul *saw* him, as hundreds of other saints have done, and it was all over. Paul accepted the simple religion of Jesus—God the Father, punisher of sin—but it was the death and resurrection that mattered most. Jesus had been simply a preacher. Paul created the redeemer. He thundered to the world that Jesus had lifted the primitive curse, and that his "holy spirit"—one of the commonest of phrases in those days—still lived amongst his followers.

This first statement of Christian theology is—in spite of the thousands of books that have been written about it—fairly simple. Paul never bothered about the precise relations or natures of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There was one God, and this God had assumed flesh in a woman's womb, then shed it and gone back to heaven. His "spirit" or his "grace" now helped men to avoid personal sins. All that they had to do was to get together

in little groups of churches (*ecclesiae* or "convocations") to practice virtue, to hold the commemoration supper, and to await the coming of the kingdom. There was now no need for circumcision, sacrifices or synagogues.

The Epistles, we are told, were written as if Jesus did not exist. I should say, rather, that the Gospels were written as if Paul did not exist.

We shall probably never recover the true history of the beginning of Christianity, but in the Epistles and Acts we have a red glow here and there of conflict. Well did Jesus say that he came to bring into the world, not peace, but a sword. There were at once a dozen struggles: Peter or Paul, faith or good works, resurrection or no resurrection, obligation to the Jewish law or freedom. Christ had forgotten to leave instructions. His Church settled these dozen fiery controversies only to find itself locked in a terrific and protracted fight with Gnosticism. It emerged from that to confront Montanism, and Novatianism, and Ebionitism. After these came Patripassianism, Adoptionism, Modalism, Sabellianism, and Arianism. The fierce passions and bloodshed of these struggles had hardly ceased when Nestorius and Eutychius, Helvidius and Jovinian, Donatus and Pelagius raised the temperature again. Then came the Monophysites, the Monothelites . . . But the list would be too long. The battle is as fierce as ever today.

The struggle with the Gnostics was inevitable and began early. In Acts (Chap. viii) there is a well-known story of a man in Samaria who had won a great reputation by "magic," and who offered the apostles money to teach him *their* magic. The story is probably as correct as the description of the Pharisees: a malignant libel. Simon may very well have been an early Gnostic.

Just as "Agnostic" means one who does not know (whether there is a God or not), so "Gnostic" is a man or woman who knows. These ancient Gnostics are not difficult to understand, for they swarm today in the more wealthy American cities such as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. They are initiated (generally now at five or ten dollars a lesson) into some powerful spiritual truths which are hidden from common people. Impecunious Hindus with glib tongues, Amerinds even, Theosophists, white Buddhists, Syrian "fraters," or German transcendentalists gather little groups about them and whisper the tremendous news. It is mere verbiage from beginning to end; but it is supposed to be a superior truth seen by the intuitions of a few gifted people or revealed from a more lucid world by spirits. That is Gnosticism. These people *know*.

The ancient world was, as we have abundantly seen, like ours in many respects. A time of remarkable intercommunication of peoples and dissolution of old creeds had come. Ancient traditions and revelations were dropping out of fashion. Men of "intuition,"

of great "spiritual insight," of religious genius, seers and sages, had become the oracles. In every city of the Greco-Roman world little groups gathered to be initiated by some gifted teacher, to this kind of rubbish, just as they gather in the small rooms of the Auditorium Building at Chicago today. What sober human reason could discover was not enough for them. It was the sublime truths (words) discovered by intuition (imagination) and revelation (fraud) that they wanted. And they got them: more cheaply in those days.

Gnosticism was not one philosophy or religion, any more than the ten contradictory creeds which these modern impostors sell to their dupes are one religion. But there were, broadly, common features, and these are all that we can notice here. The chief common feature was an intense emphasis on the contrast of matter and spirit, sin and virtue, darkness and light. The Persian religion was largely responsible for this: but Greek philosophy (in Plato), late Egyptian mysticism, and Buddhism (which reached nearer Asia, if not Greece) had the same dualism. The flesh was a contamination of the spirit which—poor thing—had to live in it for a time. Sin was a defilement for which the soul had to be purified and redeemed. Baptism (by water, blood, fire, or spirit), anointings, lustrations, and thrillingly esoteric rites, not to be revealed to the mob, helped. The world was full of evil spirits and good spirits (as Egypt, Babylon, and Persia taught), and you could exorcise these by mystic formulae or even calling them by name. Simon the Magician adopting Christianity in Samaria is a symbol of the Gnostic world, which stretched from Rome to Asia Minor, adopting it and turning it inside out.

Paul's religion suited these mystics and ascetics. His contempt of the flesh and glorification of the spirit were common to them all. His gospel of a redeemer from sin was real "good tidings" to them. There was obviously a great deal of truth in the new religion. It might appeal to the poor and to slaves by its denunciation of wealth and its communism, but it also appealed to these "intellectuals." Christianity spread through this esoteric world, and it set out to answer the questions which Paul and the Gospel writers had left open.

The Gnostics so hated and despised matter that they did not believe that God had created it. The Old Testament, which said that he had, was abandoned. Matter was eternal, in a chaotic state, as the Babylonians had said. But why did God have anything to do with the putrid stuff?

The Gnostics held that a number of finite but divine things had emanated from God. One of these Aeons, as they were called, had "fallen" from grace, and this altered the whole economy. God sent a great Aeon, the Demiourgos, to put order into the chaos of matter or "create" the world as we know it. This was

the Jehovah of the Jews. Then he sent an Aeon of the highest rank, Soter (Redeemer), to save the fallen Aeon and rescue the elements of light, the souls of men, from their contamination with darkness. This was Christos.

But how could an Aeon of supreme rank take flesh, with all its horrors? Most of them said that he merely used a phantasmal body, not real flesh. The Gospel story was an allegory, they said, from beginning to end. Christos abandoned his ethereal body before it was crucified; and most assuredly there was no resurrection of it, and there would be no resurrection of the flesh for any man.

I have neither space nor inclination to tell all the variation of this general body of teaching. Some men of great ability rose in the Gnostic world, and for a hundred years there was a mighty struggle. The Church won, but it had contracted not a little of the Gnostic creed. Ascetical practices (fasting, etc.) and the inclination to monasticism were fostered by these haters of the flesh. Ritual and sacramental features were adopted. Baptism became more important; Jesus nowhere insists on it except in the passage added at the end of Matthew during the Gnostic struggle. Mystic ideas or speculations about Christ crept in, as the beginning of John, the latest Gospel, shows. A definite attitude toward the Old Testament was assumed. Some sort of canon of scriptures was adopted, cutting off all but the four familiar Gospels and the Epistles and Acts. Possibly a creed was *drawn* up, as we shall see presently. In any case, the need of authority in the Church was practically demonstrated, and the position of the bishops (or "overseers" of the communities) was greatly strengthened. It had fallen to these to fight and to drive out the "heretics."

So Christianity in the second century emerged as a Church from its long conflict. It was a federation, no bishop acknowledging allegiance to any other bishop. But the bishop had more control of the "elders" (*presbyteroi,* presbyters or priests) who had at first, in a loose sort of way, managed the affairs of each community, and of the "servants" (*diaconoi,* deacons) who helped at the meetings. There was also now much exorcism of devils, sprinkling or baptizing with water, anointing with oil, and so on. New classes of assistants arose to share the lot (*cleros*) of the bishops and priests; new "clerics"—exorcists, readers, doorkeepers, etc.

There was very little growth in the first two centuries. The Gospels, as we have them, seem to have been completed in the second quarter of the second century, but they left doctrinal questions open. Jesus was the Son of God, and there was also a vague Holy Spirit; but there was only one God. The Gnostic attempt to define the relations of these had been so heretical and disturbing that most Christians were content to leave the matter as it was. The

only addition (in John) was that Jesus had existed as the Logos "with God" for all eternity. The Jew Philo had spoken of this Logos or "creative word" of God. But mystics do not require—if they do not actually dread—precise definitions; and the intellectualists were killed off.

The early Christian writers, men of moderate ability like Clement of Rome, Justin the Apologist and Irenaeus, had been absorbed in recommending the simple creed to pagans and Jews or defending it against the Gnostics. They did not enlarge it by speculations. The so-called Apostles' Creed fairly represents Christian belief at the end of the second century. No theologian now supposes that it goes back even to the first century, and in its actual form it is late. But Kattenbush has traced an ancient Roman creed to the beginning of the second century, and it is generally thought to be the one given by Tertullian:

> I believe in God, the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, his *only* son Our Lord, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried; the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father. Thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy Spirit, the *Holy Church,* the remission of sins, and the resurrection of the flesh.

Apart from the three words I have italicized, this is just a simple summary of the religion of the Gospels as we now have them. Still the Church would not say plainly that Christ was God; and the statement that he sits at the right hand of God in heaven is an expression of uncertainty of the subject. But he is now said to be the "only" son of God. This is an outcome of the Gnostic controversy. In the second century, in fact, the Ebionites, an obscure lot who denied the divinity of Christ and the virginity of Mary, were suppressed. But it is, as I said, virtually stated in the Gospels and Paul that Christ, "the Lord," is somehow or other God, and so there is nothing new. The insertion, in fine, of the Holy Church is a reflection of the new organization necessarily evolved out of the conflicts. The familiar doctrines of Christianity had still to be fabricated.

FIGHTS OVER FORMULAE

This vague and unsatisfactory condition of Christian belief could last only so long as the Church remained without men of high intellect. Ecclesiastical historians exaggerate the ability of Justin and Irenaeus and Clement of Rome. They were practical men, writing for practical purposes. The intellectuals who had joined the Church had tried to make the Christian story less crude, and they had been expelled.

But every thoughful Christian must have asked himself what this Father and Son business really meant, if there was only one

God: and as soon as any man of speculative intelligence devoted himself to the problem, there was a new heresy. Patripassians said that it was God the Father who suffered on the cross: which the bishops at once pronounced a shocking heresy. Modalists, looking to the philosophy of Aristotle, said that the Son was a "mode" of the Father; and the bishops who probably did not even know what philosophers meant by a "mode," expelled them, after half a century of acrid quarreling. Then Jesus must have been "adopted" as a Son, said others, remembering how nearly every religion had cases of adoption into the divine family. And the Adoptionists also received the order of the boot. All this, by reactions, strengthened the episcopate, the discipline, the organization, and the terms of membership of the Church.

It was near the end of the second century when abler men than the general rabble of bishops appeared in the Christian Church: Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria. Only the least intellectual of the four, Cyprian, has received the halo of the saint, and his contribution to the development of doctrine is significant. He was essentially a priest and he glorified his order. A simple division of labor and respect for the "elders" had brought about a very slight beginning of authority in the early communities. The growth of the Church had accentuated this, and the fight against heresy had raised priests and bishops more and more to the position of necessary experts. They now "searched the Scriptures" very zealously, and found that they had "received the Holy Ghost" and could "bind" or "loose" whatsoever they chose. Moreover, it was they, as successors of the apostles, who had to conduct the commemoration-supper, which was fast becoming a "sacrament," or channel of grace, and a "sacrifice." All this comes out most clearly in Cyprian's writings. They contributed very materially to the evolution of priestcraft and sacramentalism.

The three abler men are all tainted with heresy. Tertullian, a somber fanatic with a mighty power of scorn, a learned priest of the African Church, remained a heretic until he died. In view of the growth of priestcraft there had been a reaction in the second century. A certain Montanus claimed that he and two lady friends —almost the only really original feature of the Christian priestcraft is, from the start, the inevitable lady friend—had received the Holy Ghost. He denied that inspiration of this kind was confined to men in "orders," and there was a terrific fight for several decades. A large part of the Christian body resented the growth of the new sacerdotalism and rightly claimed that it had no basis in the Gospels. They held also that the clergy had no power to absolve from mortal sins. The sinner must be expelled from the Church and left to his fate. These deadly thrusts at their authority and at their ambition to make the Christian body as large as possible stung the hierarchy, and the fierce battle ended in the suppression of Mon-

tanism and a fresh accentuation of priestly authority. Hence the work of Cyprian.

Tertullian remained a Montanist or Puritan until he died. The gaiety of his early life had led to a morbid reaction, and his zeal about sin has caused him to give us some piquant pictures of the state of the Church at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century. He had a particular scorn of the Roman Church and the pretensions of its bishop or Pope. He is important mainly as a critic, an early Protestant, but, incidentally, he adopted a word of the Gnostics in regard to the relation of Father and Son. He said that the Son was *homo-ousios* (of the same substance) with the Father; and this would presently lead to a far more furious controversy than ever.

Clement of Alexandria and Origen (also of Alexandria) were the first to apply Greek philosophy to the Christian story in a form which could be generally accepted by the Church. It goes without saying that they were both, especially the learned Origen, heretical. In his early zeal he had naïvely supposed that the counsels of Jesus had to be taken literally, and he had castrated himself, on the authority of Matthew xix, 12. His later method was simple. Whatever seemed absurd or contradictory or opposed to sound science in the new faith was to be taken figuratively. He denied the eternal torment of the wicked and, like every Christian who knew both his own creed and the general culture of his time, he held a form of faith like that of the Modernist.

Origen was deposed, excommunicated, and bitterly persecuted, so that we cannot attribute to him much influence in developing the system of doctrine. Clement was more diplomatic, and remained within the Church. His writings, however, had a narrow circulation amongst the educated converts of Alexandria, and it is mainly the practice of applying the ideas of Greek philosophy to a precise definition of the Christian beliefs that we have to note in these two writers.

At first the general belief had been that baptism was the only sacrament, the only form of remission of sin, and it was deferred as long as possible so as to leave a few opportunities to human nature. Mortal sin committed after baptism could not be forgiven. This condemned the Christian body to be eternally small, and the clergy accordingly discovered that God, in his great mercy, had arranged a second escape from hell by giving the priests power to remit sin. The proof was in various texts of the Gospels about the keys of heaven, the power to bind and to loose, and so on: texts which earlier priests had thoughtfully interpolated in the primitive records of the life of Jesus.

There was, as I have said, a very wide and strong revolt against this, and it was still largely held that apostasy during a persecution could not be forgiven. In face of the general apostasy in the third

century the last trace of the old rigor had to go. All sins could be forgiven by the priests: a most happy and convenient discovery, both for the priests and the sinners. The Catholic doctrine of sacraments and orders was being slowly and shamelessly developed.

THE EVOLUTION OF PRIESTCRAFT

An odious word, *priestcraft*. It means, literally, the trade or skilled work of priests, but, probably through its connection with priests, the word "craft" has come to have an unpleasant insinuation. It is, I am told, malicious and untruthful to use it. And I retort that in the plainest literary and historical sense of the word what I am going to describe is the evolution of priestcraft. The "evolution" of Christianity is of the variety that is now called "creative evolution"; and the creator was the ambition of the clergy.

Strictly orthodox people will tell you that Christ left secret instructions with his apostles how to form and equip his Church when the time came, and that, after all, the Holy Spirit remained with them. It is unfortunate that one half of Christendom interprets these secret instructions and the counsels of the Holy Ghost in the directly opposite manner to the other half. The Catholic thinks that the plan included the creation of priests, bishops, archbishops, Popes, the eucharist, the confessional, seven sacraments, the mass, etc.; the Protestant, who does not seem to know what the Holy Ghost was about from the third to the sixteenth century, says that the instructions were precisely to damn and anathematize all these things.

Let us use a little common sense. Jesus expected the end of the world within twenty or thirty years, and he never dreamed about a "church." Philologists are not agreed as to where the word came from even, and few now admit that it is a corruption of *kuriake*, "the Lord's [house]." There was at first a gathering or meeting, which is in Greek *ecclesie*, or in Latin-Greek *ecclesia*. In time of peace the Christians built or bought special rooms. Some think that the meeting-place of the Greek and Roman trade union was the model. Others think that the court-room or public hall (*basilica*) was followed. However that may be, the Christians, seeing that the end of the world did not come, were forced to have temples like their religious neighbors.

By what steps this "church" became a building of the common religious type, with a severely isolated and consecrated body of priests offering "sacrifice" at one end of it, no one can tell; but the idea that this was "according to plan" is absurd.

Whatever else is obscure, it is plain that in the early Church there was only one "sacrament"; and that not in the doctrinal sense, for the Catholic doctrine of sacraments was manufactured mainly by Augustine. Baptism itself presents no difficulty. It was

common in Judea and in all the ethical religions of the time. All the other "sacraments" were plainly manufactured by the priests. Cyprian very effectively began the manufacture of "holy orders." Extreme Unction and Confirmation crept up to the rank so slowly and unobtrusively that no one can retrace the evolution. As to "matrimony," hardly any Catholic doctrine is more audacious. The Church had no control of marriage until the Middle Ages. It was a purely human matter. The "seven sacraments" are a discovery of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century; and the most resolute theologian cannot affect to find them before the fifth century. They are priest-made; and, since they gave enormous power and wealth to the clergy, they are priestcraft-made.

The services grew in the same manner. There is no heresy about the eucharist in early times because there was no eucharist. There was no "mass." The word is said to come from the closing words in Latin: "Ite, missa est" ("Clear out: it is all over"). But the ritual was in Greek, even in Rome, until the end of the third century. Cyprian had by that time discovered that the offering of the bread and wine was a "sacrifice," and only a consecrated priest could offer it. The ritual was, however, probably borrowed for the most part from the Mithraic mass. Augustine is repeatedly in difficulties on that point. The Manichees also had a "consecrated host," and Augustine stoops so low as seriously to repeat the Christian calumny that, to make their sacrament, the priest had intercourse with a lady of the congregation and moistened the flour with the seminal fluid! As I said, the Church covered up its traces so effectively that we follow its evolution with difficulty.

It is clear that every fresh development increased the power of the clergy, the dependence and subjection of the laity, and it will be enough to illustrate this from the evolution of the Papacy.

Of the two titles of the head of the Roman Church, Pope and Sovereign Pontiff, the first (Papa—the Roman child's word for "father") was the common title of all bishops in the first few centuries and is still a common title in the east: the second is the title of the head of the Roman (pagan) religion, which the Bishops of Rome assumed when the Christian emperors discarded it. That title is a fitting symbol of the paganization of the Church, the imitation of the pagan priesthoods. But in this particular development priest was endeavoring to exploit priest, which is a very different matter from exploiting the laity, and there was a historic struggle which only ended with the general ruin of Europe. The Pope became Pope only when there was no other Pope, no strong bishop, to oppose his claim.

The evidence of forgery is now so notorious that even the "Catholic Encyclopedia" has to sacrifice one beloved and profitable fiction after another. The evidence is hardly less notorious to

historial scholars in regard to the Papacy, but no Catholic publication would dare to weaken the foundations of that formidable institution, and so the "Encyclopedia" and all other Catholic works put before their readers a grossly untruthful account of its fortunes in the early Church. I have analyzed the evidence in my "Crises in the History of the Papacy" and, for the chief points, in my "Popes and Their Church." A slight sketch will suffice here.

It was not unnatural that in the early Church the episcopal sees which were supposed to have been directly founded by the apostles should be regarded as a special distinction. This sentiment was carefully fostered by the occupants of the sees. It entitled them to the first place and the most oracular utterance in assemblies. In their churches, they said, the tradition of the apostles existed in its purest form. Rome, where the Church was said to have been founded by Peter and Paul, the two greatest apostles, was one of these outstanding sees.

But unfortunately for the ambition of the Roman bishops, there were other "apostolic sees" in the east, and the occupants watched their Roman brother as rivals watch an ambitious candidate for the presidency of the United States. They smiled at his pretensions. The list of Popes for several centuries does not contain a single man of any distinction. Half the martyrs of the list are bogus, and most of the saints got their haloes very cheap. To the Greeks it was, in spite of the importance of Rome, a sort of colonial bishopric. There were two million Christians in the east, and not two hundred thousand in the west. How the eastern churches ever suffered the adoption of a Gospel in which Rome had interpolated the priceless pun about Peter, I have never been able to understand.

However, when, in 190, the Roman bishop made a first trial of his wings, he fell to earth very heavily. Pope Victor *commanded* the bishops of Asia Minor to celebrate Easter on the same day as the Romans. There you are, says the Catholic writer; Papal supremacy in the year 190. The Catholic writer never tells the sequel. Catholic Truth always means the suppression of unpalatable truth. Any person (who can read Greek, or at least Latin) will find in the "Ecclesiastical History" of Bishop Eusebius (v, 34) that the Asiatic bishops told Victor to mind his own business, and, when he pompously insisted, were very rude to him.

Some twenty years later the sardonic Tertullian writes that he hears that some bishop of Rome is calling himself "the Sovereign Pontiff," and he whips the claim with his scorn. But this particular Pope, "Saint and Martyr Callistus"—an ex-slave who died comfortably in his bed after a very comfortable and by no means ascetic life—seems to have confined his ambition to a region where there was no other cock to fight.

In 252 "St." Cyprian came up against the Papal ambition; and Catholic writers proudly tell how this great saint and martyr acknowledged the Roman claim. He did precisely the opposite. With all the African bishops at his back he gave the ambitious Pope Cornelius just the same thrashing as the Asiatic bishops had given Pope Victor. In letter after letter—see especially lv and lxvii in the Migne collection—he told Rome to mind its own business, to drop its arrogant and foolish claim, and to see that "each prelate has the right to follow his own judgment." Pope Stephen tried to follow up the matter, and the African bishops, meeting in solemn council, drafted a scalding reply, still extant, which closes all question of Papal authority in the third century.

As far as the eastern Churches are concerned I need not labor the point. They have never acknowledged the Pope's claim. Every assertion of it was met with scorn from the first. The African Church remained the only one of importance in the west, outside Italy, and to its last days it resisted Rome. The Catholic writer always quotes a supposed saying of St. Augustine, in the Pelagian controversy: "Rome has spoken: the case is finished." He said nothing of the kind. It is a complete misrepresentation of his words, in his 131st sermon: "The decisions of two [African] councils have been sent to the Apostolic See, and a rescript has reached us. The case is finished." It is the joint condemnation which he stresses. And what the Catholic writer never adds, and usually does not know, is that the African bishops detected the Pope in the use of forgeries, and told him that they trusted to hear "no more of his pompousness." When they did hear more of it, they sent him a scornful letter about his attempt to "introduce the empty pride of the world into the Church of Christ."

A few years later, Italy, Spain and Africa were trodden under the feet of the northern barbarians. The Pope was "head of the universal Church": that is to say, of the universal ruin west of the Adriatic Sea. The part of the world which remained more or less civilized, east of the Adriatic, laughed at the claims of the Popes. In the west there remained only one strong bishop, Hilary, and when Pope Leo tried to exert an authority over *him*, he used, the Pope himself says (Ep. x, 3) "language which no layman even should dare to use."

Then the black night of the Middle Ages descended, and Popes could perform such antics as no leaders of religion have ever performed in the world before or since. The crop of forgeries grew thicker every decade. Lives of saints and martyrs appeared, as I have earlier described, by the thousand. The whole story of the first four centuries was falsified, and history received an adulteration from which it has not yet completely recovered.

Popes went on to aim at kingship as well as spiritual supremacy. Pope Gregory—"St. Gregory the Great"—ruling fifty thousand grossly ignorant people in the sixth century where the emperors had ruled a million, persuaded the "new rich" of Italy that the end of the world was now really at hand, and they would do well to enter heaven naked. He thus secured enormous tracts of Italy for the Papacy. But this was not enough for the Popes of the eighth century. They forged the most amazing documents that forgers ever produced, duped even Charlemagne with them, and founded the Papal States.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Degradation of Woman

The Claim of the Churches—Women Before Christ—The Greek and Roman Woman—The Clergy and the Modern Struggle

The Claim of the Churches

I AM what is called a Feminist. Thirty years ago I left a monastery and began a sane human existence. Within two or three years, I find, I was defending the rights of women. Twenty-five years ago I sat in the lobby of the British Parliament with two of the oldest women-fighters, awaiting the issue of a "Suffrage Bill." The cause was not then respectable, and I was the only writer who associated with them. Now it has the blessing of the church; and my services are not required or mentioned. It is successful. Only a few weeks ago I attended a great women's meeting in the central park of London. There were a hundred orators, and half of them introduced Jesus and the Bible. Church banners glittered on the platforms. Pretty parsons evoked ripples of laughter and tears of sentiment. And I hung, unknown, on the fringes of the great crowds and smiled—rather cynically.

Some of us can remember the forty years' fight, or forty years of the fight for the elementary rights of women. Why had this fight to be undertaken at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century? Had the age of Voltaire brought some worsening of the position of women? Were these injustices which we fought a creation of our "materialistic age"? What is the simple meaning of the fact that during eighteen hundred and fifty years of the Era of Redemption there was no struggle, and that the struggle began and was carried to a successful conclusion in the Era of Skepticism? At least there is no dispute about that fact; and nobody above the age of twenty is ignorant of it.

Yet the clergy and religious writers are able, unrebuked, to tell women all over the world that Christianity has been the best friend they ever had. The suffrage? That is a political matter, they say: a detail in a necessarily slow political evolution. Very few men had the suffrage in Europe a century ago. None had it a few centuries earlier. (It does not occur to them or to the women to wonder *why* no one had the suffrage.) The political sentiment of the times

was for despotic monarchy. Religion was not consulted. And so on.

The clergy are poor sociologists. You have to remind them that it is not merely a question of the suffrage. Let me put the position in the words of one of the most respected of American women, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She is describing the wrongs of woman in what was then, in 1850, the most enlightened city of the United States, Boston:

> Woman could not hold any property, either earned or inherited. If unmarried, she was obliged to place it in the hands of a trustee, to whose will she was subject. If she contemplated marriage, and desired to call her property her own, she was forced by law to make a contract with her intended husband by which she gave up all title or claim to it. A woman, either married or unmarried, could hold no office of trust or power. She was not a person. She was not recognized as a citizen. She was not a factor in the human family. She was not a unit, but a zero, in the sum of civilization. . . . The status of a married woman was little better than that of a domestic servant. By the English Common Law [in force in Boston] her husband was her lord and master. He had the sole custody of her person and of her minor children. He could punish her "with a stick no bigger than his thumb," and she could not complain against him. . . . The common law of the State held man and wife to be one person, but that person was the husband. He could by will deprive her of every part of his property, and also of what had been her own before marriage. He was the owner of all her real estate and her earnings. The wife could make no contract and no will, nor, without her husband's consent, dispose of the legal interest of her real estate. . . . She did not own a rag of her clothing. She had no personal rights and could hardly call her soul her own. Her husband could steal her children, rob her of her clothing, neglect to support the family; she had no legal redress. If a wife earned money by her labor, the husband could claim the pay as his share of the proceeds. ("History of Women's Suffrage," vol. III, p. 290.)

The comfortable matron who now listens to mellifluous assurances from her Episcopal or Methodist pulpit ought to know these things. Let her imagine herself in this position of her grandmother. What a degradation, she will exclaim!

The degradation was brought upon woman by Christianity. Christianity found woman free and respected, and degraded her to the position described by Mrs. Stanton; and the degradation was lifted from her, mainly owing to the work of "infidels," in this age which seems to you so materialistic and menacing to women.

What, then, is the Christian claim? On what sort of evidence is it based? Rhetorical claims are not, as a rule based upon evidence. Evidence is "cold." Facts are rather boring, sometimes actually disagreeable. What we love is sonorous phraseology, delivered with eupeptic dogmatism or original bluntness, or softened with a tender glow of sentiment which it has taken many hours to make natural and spontaneous. What we love is the vague insinuation of horrors in the pagan past or the pagan future which religious

delicacy forbids us to make more explicit. A sermon is not a mere lecture. We go to church, not to learn, but to be uplifted.

Some years ago I was invited to write a book ("The Bible in Europe") on the question of the precise contribution of the Christian religion to the civilization of the world. Queen Victoria, not a learned person, though not as stupid as most members of the British royal family, had said that the Bible was the source of England's greatness, and this authoritative assurance still reverberates from the pulpits. Since I do not care to waste either my own time or that of my readers, I asked a friend to ask a relative who is a learned divine what the Church really claimed to have done.

But my friend incautiously said that the information was for *me,* and the answer was very guarded. They do not, it seems, claim to have created civilization. There are specific contributions—there is the general sentiment of charity and justice—there is the refinement of morals . . . . in short, I was referred to certain standard Christian works, and I read them. Dr. Fairbairn, in particular, was recommended, and I learned from him that early Christianity put a "halo" about woman, "taught us reverence for woman." Others contended that the pagan had regarded woman merely as "an instrument of his lust," and Christianity changed all that. Others felt sure that the apotheosis of Mary must have uplifted the whole sex. Others, a little behind the times, ventured to quote the heroic virtue of Agnes, Catherine, Cecilia, and all the other dead myths.

In short, no religious writer, in talking of the change or improvement which Christianity is claimed to have effected, accurately sets out the position of woman before 400 A. D. (when the world was driven into the Church) and the position of woman, say, in 800 A. D. I doubt if there is a religious writer capable of doing it.

WOMEN BEFORE CHRIST

A preacher first abuses the pagan Romans, then, when you prove their greatness, he points out that Jesus was already in the world and in some subtle way, by some imperceptible means . . . . But not even the most ingenious apologist will attempt to prove that the position of woman in ancient Egypt, Babylon, or Crete was lit by the light and uplifted by the spiritual force of a gospel which did not yet exist. Were these nations not notoriously in darkness and the shadow of death?

But, says the preacher, politely, do not forget that there was already a foregleam of Christianity in the world. A partial revelation had been communicated to the Hebrews. And the Hebrews were brought into contact with the Babylonians and may, by their superior ideals, have moderated the grossness of pagan conduct. People really do say these things in the churches.

In the year 586 B. C., King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and carried away most of the Jews of the better

class to his great city on the Euphrates. Let us imagine the dark-eyed maid Rebecca or the portly matron Susannah blinking in the light of the brilliant metropolis and then inquiring what the position of woman was.

We know well what the position of woman was in Judea. It is pithily put in Leviticus xii, 1-5. This book had in the year 586 not yet been forged, it is true, but it clearly gives an old law:

> And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,
> Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and borne a man child; then she shall be *unclean seven days;* according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.
> And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying *three and thirty days;* she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.
> But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean *two weeks,* as in her separation; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying *three-score and six days.*

Pretty ironic to describe this bit of primitive tribal barbarism and superstition as a special revelation from the Most High! It just expresses woman's position under this "foregleam of Christianity."

The female was an inferior creature. She never had a lover or chose a husband. Her parents handed her over to a youth who became her very despotic lord and master. She was "unclean" about ten times in twenty years, as a rule, to say nothing of shorter periods. She had no property, no personality. Her husband could divorce her when he willed; she could not divorce him when she willed. Her husband could take a second wife or a concubine or dally with painted ladies. Rebecca had to disguise herself as a prostitute if she wanted a change (Genesis xxxviii, 14). And when she had fulfilled the whole Law, she was peppered with spiteful aphorisms (Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, etc.) about her malice and odiousness.

Women were as free and respected in Babylon in 586 B. C. as they are in Boston today. The deciphering of the literature of ancient Babylon has completely discredited those picturesque ideas of the vice of the great city which are still used to give purple patches to sermons. So far were the Babylonians from enjoying a remarkable looseness in sexual relations that they incurred sentence of death by adultery. We will hope that their practice was not as savage as their law. And there was not one law for the man and one for the woman (as in Christendom). The man and woman were bound together and thrown into the Euphrates. A man was burned alive for rape. A mother and son were burned alive for incest. A man was drowned for intercourse with his daughter-in-law. A retired priestess was burned alive if she went to a wine-shop for a drink.

No woman was forced to prostitute herself at the temple, and there was probably no temple of that kind in Babylon. The marriage-contracts, of which we have a large number, commonly guarantee that the bride is a virgin.

In other words, if we were to return tomorrow to the "morals of ancient Babylon," as preachers somberly announce that we may if their income is cut off, a woman would find herself protected from man's "lust" by a series of drastic laws which no section of Christendom ever knew! Such is the imbecility of these dismal prophecies about the future of the race. When at last the truth, which has been known to scholars for decades, breaks through the dense mists of the religious world, we shall have the Christian matrons of America *demanding* a return to pagan morals and the wicked people of America (secretly supported by the clergy) violently resisting the proposal.

The beginning of civilization is dated by different authorities at various periods between 3000 and 4000 B. C. This means that the stretch of time during which Egypt and Babylon were the chief representatives of civilization is far greater than the whole of subsequent history; and during all that time woman was free, independent and the equal of man. She was "treated with justice and respect."

Looking back, in the light of what I have said, upon that evolution, and taking the position of woman as a test of civilization, we should have to divide the whole into two eras, the era of light and justice and the era of darkness and injustice; and it is an elementary historical truth to say that the era of light is the period *before Christ* and the era of darkness the time which we proudly call the *Christian Era.*

It is an elementary and uncontroverted historical truth that the recovery of woman, the removal of her wrongs, did not begin until the Christian domination of the world was profoundly shaken and reduced; it made progress in proportion as the Churches grew weaker; it received no assistance whatever from Christianity; and it was brought to a triumphant issue only when the majority of men in the cities of the world had thrown off their allegiance to Christianity.

THE GREEK AND ROMAN WOMAN

Let us say at once that in the Greek and Roman civilizations woman had not the position of equality and freedom which she had had in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and, apparently, Crete. In different strains of the human family a different attitude was adopted toward woman. In the Semitic race, to which the Hebrews belonged, a harsh and masterful attitude was evolved, whereas amongst the Egyptians and Mesopotamians woman seems to have

been treated from the first as a normal member of the community; not because she was the mother, but because her personality was as justly recognized as that of the man.

In the Indo-Persian-European family the attitude was totally different in different branches. The slavery of the Hindu woman of recent times is not, perhaps, her original situation; but there must from the first have been a domineering attitude toward women. In the Teutonic branch of the family, on the contrary, woman was highly respected. The Greeks and Romans come between these two extremes. Amongst the early Romans, especially, the man had a quite despotic power over the woman; though it was not abused, as one finds it abused amongst the Hebrews or Hindus, and it soon disappeared.

When the full light of history falls upon the Greek community we find woman in a position that certainly would not accord with modern standards. A special and secluded part of the home was set apart for the women, and, while their excursions from the home were restricted, the men had full liberty. Athens and most of the Greek city-states were democracies, yet woman had no part whatever in the political life. Her place was the home.

Girls, it is true, had a life of comparative freedom and, one feels that they would say, happiness. They had excellent athletic training, music, games, and graceful dancing. The old idea, that a woman was a man's property, to be carefully guarded from a defilement that lowered her value, persisted; but there was no note of contempt, no insinuation, as in Judea, that she was unclean and useful only as a breeder of men. She was the companion of man; but it was understood that politics and war were not her concern. She was excluded from public life.

Quite early in Greek life, however, a movement began for the removal of whatever wrongs and disabilities she had. The "Medea" of the great tragedian Euripides is one of the most poignant presentments of the case for woman that was ever given to the world. Its exaggeration is so great, yet so sincerely and profoundly felt, that no woman-genius could have penned a more formidable complaint. Already, also, the Greeks had the poetry of Sappho. For three or four thousand years, in Crete, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, woman had been free and respected. Then for a few centuries we find her in Greece, not degraded or vilely used, for nearly every great Greek writer treats her with respect, but certainly in a position of dependence and inferiority. But at the very dawn of the Golden Age of Athens a movement for her emancipation begins, and it has the support of all the best elements of Greek life.

Unfortunately, Athens was ruined before the movement could reach a successful issue. Yet its ideals continued. The chief Greek writer about the time of Christ, Plutarch, maintained that woman was mentally and morally equal to man, and ought to have, as Plato had said, the same education. He denied that the moral law

should be interpreted more liberally in the case of man than of woman. And the last glimpse that we have in history of Greek culture, before it is entirely lost in a Christianized and barbarized world, is a picture of the philosopher Hypatia taking a leading part in the life of the great city of Alexandria and by her culture and personality rising high above all her contemporaries.

The murder of Hypatia by a Christian mob is a fitting allegory of the murder of the new hope of women by the new religion. That may seem a harsh sentence, but even the broad historical facts must give the modern Christian woman ground for reflection. A movement for the emancipation of woman from grievances far lighter than those of a century ago began in Greece nearly two thousand three hundred years ago. It gathered force and was endorsed by the most influential Greek writers. But it completely disappeared when Christianity became the religion of Europe, and it did not reappear until skepticism about Christianity spread through the civilized world.

It is usual in religious literature to divide Roman history into two parts: a first part, until a century or two before the birth of Christ, in which woman was very virtuous but a slave, and a later part in which she was free but very wicked.

This generalization is as false as most of the other "historical" statements upon which the supposed service to the race of the new religion is based. The women of the Roman Republic (in its earlier centuries) were assuredly very chaste and virtuous. The names of some of them rank with the names of Christian saints. But, just as the chastity of the saint is a kind of commercial venture, the price of a colossal reward in heaven, so the virtue of the early Roman maid or matron may be attributed to fear of the lash or the knife. The women were the property of the men. They ranked with the children. The law did not enter a Roman's house. He had power of life and death over his wife, his children, and his slaves. Small wonder that the wife and daughters were very "virtuous."

Yet even here woman was far better treated than she was in Judea. One of the Roman historians, Valerius Maximus, makes the almost incredible claim that there was no divorce in the Roman Republic for five hundred and twenty years after its foundation! The Jewish civilization—the real, not the legendary, civilization of the Hebrews—was practically a contemporary of the Roman, and a record of woman's experience in the two would be an instructive document. Roman women were not confined in special quarters of the house, were not forbidden to go out to dine or to the theater, and had no separate places in the temple. They were treated with the greatest respect at home and abroad.

Moreover, the tyranny of the older Roman custom broke down long before the time of Christ. Greece had been civilized only a few centuries—not fifteen hundred years, like Christian Europe—when

it started a movement for the emancipation of woman. Rome, similarly, was civilized only some three or four centuries when its women began a formidable movement for emancipation and admission to political life.

In the second century before Christ scenes curiously like those of the suffrage-struggle of modern times were witnessed in Rome. Crowds of women obstructed the way of the reactionary senator and loudly demanded their rights. And I may add that their greatest opponent, Cato the Elder, the personification of the old Roman discipline, is nevertheless reported to have said: "A man who beats his wife or his children lays impious hands on that which is most holy and most sacred in the world."

The Christian scholars who claim that at least the new religion taught men a "reverence" for woman are almost completely ignorant of the facts. They rely only on the usual rhetoric about the vices of the pagans and the virtues of the Christians.

All this rhetoric is based upon the most scandalously loose quotation of particular instances. Even the best Christian writers ask us to blush at the crimes of Nero or Elogabalus, and never mention that during three-fourths of the empire its rulers were good men. They say dark and vague things about the vices of Messalina and Faustine (which are grossly exaggerated), and they never tell that there were ten good pagan empresses for every bad one. They quote St. Jerome about the virtue of his score of Christian pupils, and they entirely ignore his assurance, in the same letters, that the Christian world generally was vicious and corrupt.

There was no such *general* contrast of pagan vice and Christian virtue; and the notion that at the adoption of Christianity the world passed from an era of vice to one of virtue, from a period in which woman was the toy of "brutal lusts" to a period in which she was respected because of her Christian virtues, is one of the most fantastic and unjustifiable beliefs that zeal ever engendered.

THE CLERGY AND THE MODERN STRUGGLE

After about the year 500 "human life was suspended for a thousand years," says a brilliant French writer. Something like that certainly will be the unanimous verdict of historians when our scholars have shed the last trace of subservience to the clergy. At present some of them have an affectation of showing that the Middle Ages were not quite so bad as the older historians had said. It is wrong, it appears, to call the early Middle Ages "the Dark Ages," because, by diligent search, we can find a lamp in it here and there!

As far as our present subject, the degradation of woman, is concerned, no one is quite so foolish as to try to defend the Church. By the year 300 A. D. woman was in a position of freedom and respect. She had enjoyed that position throughout nearly the whole four thousand years of civilization. After the year 500 A. D.—

allowing two centuries for the application of the principles of the new religion—woman fell to a state of degradation which has no parallel in the history of any pagan nation. For more than a thousand years, during which Christianity absolutely dominated the life of man, she remained in that condition of degradation. That requires a good deal of explaining if you are reluctant to admit the obvious fact—Christianity degraded woman.

And there is no room here for the familiar quibble that it was not Christianity, but the men who professed it, that injured woman. It was quite plainly the doctrine. It was the morbid puritanism about love and the legends of Genesis. The men who most drastically relegated woman to an inferior position were the men whom the Churches regarded as their religious heroes and oracles. The perfectly attired modern preacher in a "Fifth Avenue Chapel" somewhere will scarcely venture to say that he knows more about Christianity than did St. Gregory, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, or St. Bernard.

Nor is there any room for the further familiar quibble, that it took the world a long time to realize the true implications of the Christian spirit. Modern Christianity, wherever it makes this claim, has not discovered a new meaning in the words of Jesus, but has *disowned his teaching*. The medieval and Catholic doctrine of monasticism is a perfectly sound implication of Christ's teaching. Jerome and Athanasius, and all genuine monks and nuns, did exactly what Christ advised. The Fundamentalist is in this respect a Modernist. He rejects whole chunks of the teaching of Jesus and Paul just as cheerfully as he rejects the prediction of the end of the world. Christian teaching—the teaching of Jesus and Paul—implied that woman was inferior, that her moral weakness handed the race over to the devil and lost us paradise, and that her sweetest charms are so many baits on the devil's hooks.

The emancipation of woman was impossible as long as people really believed the teaching of Jesus and Paul. A well-known preacher once showed me, with some pride, a sermon of his on the woman question. The text was one of St. Paul's consecrated bits of rudeness to woman, and the sermon then began: "That is where Paul and I differ." Precisely.

The true story of woman's recovery of the position she had held under paganism can be told in a few lines, and it is actually more significant and instructive when it is so told. From the fifth to the fifteenth century, from the death of Hypatia to the time of Petrarch at least, no one had a good word to say for woman. Not a scholar in Christendom, not a priest or writer, was inspired to make a syllable of protest against the disgraceful injustice of the system. It was the literary men of the Renaissance who began to raise woman—the woman of their class—to a position of equality;

and the Renaissance was, notoriously, the rebirth of paganism and skepticism.

Then came the Reformation and what Catholics humorously call "the Christian Renaissance," or a half-hearted attempt to reform the morals of Rome under the lash of Protestantism. Europe became again intensely interested in religion. Many millions of people cut each other's throats in the name of religion. The civilization of Europe was put back a hundred years by the zeal for religion. And the attempt to emancipate woman was at once crushed.

The opinions of feminist writers about the effect of the Reformation vary remarkably. Out of six which lie before me Mrs. Stanton regards the Reformation "one of the most important steps," and Mrs. Gage thinks that the anti-Christian bias against woman "took new force after the rise of Melanchthon, Huss and Luther." Lecky believes that, in restoring the credit of marriage, the Reformers rendered a great service, and Professor Karl Pearson finds that they caused a material increase of prostitution—which is impossible in the opinion of anybody who knows the Catholic Middle Ages—and darkened the prospect for woman.

Most of these writers argue from a theoretical point of view. Luther gave a shrewd and healthy blow at the Catholic glorification of virginity and all the hypocrisy caused by it—but he also said such things as: "No gown worse becomes a woman than the desire to be wise." To say that he robbed women (how many?) of opportunities by suppressing nunneries is fatuous; but he certainly provided no other opportunities for them. The "three K's" (*Kirche, Küche, Kinder*—church, kitchen, and children) were stereotyped as the ideal of the German woman.

The Reformation did nothing for women on the continent of Europe. In England, in the Elizabethan age, educated women (a tiny minority) had more freedom, socially, though they lost their last hold on public life. But their new freedom was plainly due to the fact that in England the Reformation and the Renaissance occurred together. The Reformers, through a statute of Henry VIII, forbade "women and others of low condition" to read the Bible. The Humanists invited them to read.

But the historical facts are clear enough. Protestantism, of a pure or Puritanical type, was as deadly to woman as Catholicism. What did she get from the Puritans of England or New England? From the Calvinists of Switzerland? From the Lutherans of Germany and Scandinavia? Nothing whatever. Protestant divines were as blind to the injustice of the system as Catholic divines were. The service of Protestantism was indirect; and I would stress that in this sense it was mighty. It smashed the tyranny of Rome and could not set up a lasting tyranny of its own. Yet to use a phrase

of Emerson's in a different connection, Luther would, if he had foreseen the revolt of the women, have cut off his right hand rather than nail his theses to the door of the cathedral.

This is the stark truth about the redemption of woman from all the injustices which Christianity had brought upon her. *Not one single Christian clergyman the world over raised a finger in the work until it had so far succeeded that the clergy had to save their faces by joining it.* No amount of pulpit rhetoric, no amount of strained apology from Christian feminist writers, can lessen the significance of that fact. And to it you must add another of equal significance: *The men and women who started the revolt against the injustice and carried it to the stage of invincibility were non-Christian in the proportion of at least five to one.*

Take the movement in America. Three of its greatest leaders, Mrs. Cady Stanton, Mrs. Gage, and Miss Susan B. Anthony have described it minutely and conscientiously in their monumental "History of Woman Suffrage." It began in 1820, when Frances Wright, a Deist, a pupil of the British Agnostic Robert Owen, invaded the States. She was joined by the brilliant Ernestine L. Rose, a Polish Jewess who had cast off all theology; by Lucretia Mott, a Quaker whose views were regarded as "heresy" even in the Society of Friends; by Abby Kelly, another Rationalistic Quaker; and by the sisters Grimke, also Quakers. I have shown in my "Biographical Dictionary of Distinguished Rationalists" that Mrs. Cady Stanton, Mrs. Gage, and Miss Anthony, who led the fight in the next generation, were all Agnostics. And for fifty years, as this detailed history shows, the clergy of America were the most deadly enemies of the movement, basing their opposition expressly upon the Bible.

I smiled when, in 1917, I was invited to speak for the movement in New York. It was then respectable. Parsons were available by the score. Few women in the movement had ever heard of Fanny Wright or Abby Kelly or Ernestine Rose and the other splendid pioneers. None knew of the time when pastoral letters had circulated amongst the American clergy calling their attention to "the dangers which at present seem to threaten the female character with widespread and permanent injury." That was all over. Preachers were now assuring them that Christianity was the best friend, the only friend, that woman had ever had!

It was the same everywhere. In Britain the pioneers were Mary Wollstonecraft, Fanny Wright, George Eliot, Harriet Martineau —all Rationalists—supported by Godwin, Robert Owen, Jeremy Bentham, G. J. Holyoake, and J. S. Mill—all Agnostics or Atheists. In Germany the work was done by Max Stirner, Karl Marx, Büchner, Engels, Bebel, and Liebknecht—all Atheists. In France it was Sièyes and Condorcet—Atheists—who first pleaded for the

emancipation of woman, and George Sand, Michelet, Saint-Simon, and Fourier—all deep-dyed heretics—who raised the plea again in the nineteenth century. In Scandinavia Ibsen and Björnson and Ellen Key—all Rationalists—lead the protest.

Let the women of the world read their remarkable story once more, with open eyes. They will . . . . No, not yet. But a time will come when the women of America—and it may be this generation in your high schools today—will put away forever, not ungently, the figure of Christ: will burn Paul in effigy: and will raise a superb monument to Voltaire.

CHAPTER XIX

Christianity and Slavery

Paganism and Slavery—The Gospel and the Slave—
The Churches and the Workers

Paganism and Slavery

ABOUT the year 100 A. D. two remarkable lectures on slavery were delivered in Rome. The central part of Rome was a very broad open space, the Forum, crowded with statues and works of art, lined with beautiful marble temples and public halls. In these halls lectures were delivered, just as they are in New York and Chicago today; and, as the Romans knew and practised shorthand as well as we do, many of the lectures have been preserved for us.

The orator to whom I now refer was the eloquent Greek Stoic, Dion Chrysostom, or "Dion of the Golden Mouth." He was no demagogue. At times you would see him driving about Rome with the great emperor, Trajan, of whom he was an intimate friend. He was the idol of the thoughtful section of the Roman nobility. And for the two days—the subject was too large for one day—Dion had announced as his subject "Slavery": a delicate topic, one would imagine, if pagan Rome were quite the slave-driving city it is commonly supposed to have been, unless the aristocratic orator intended to justify the institution for his aristocratic audience, every member of which owned many slaves.

But Dion, as we read in the extant lectures, denounced slavery as unjust. About the same time there was in Rome a very democratic poet named Juvenal who was putting in fiery verse, or satire, certain statements about the brutality of the Roman aristocrats to their slaves. Every religious writer in the world knows those "Satires" of Juvenal; although every classical authority in the world will warn you not to take their statements seriously. But no religious writer in the world seems ever to have heard of Dion Chyrsostom and his denunciation of slavery.

It is quite formal, explicit and lengthy. It fills two lectures. Here is an express and honorable condemnation of slavery, by a well-known friend of the emperor, in the most public and effective circumstances, at a time when the Christians were a mere handful of obscure folk, mumbling a Greek liturgy and debating whether the end of the world was not at hand.

It is the reverse of the truth to say that Christianity abolished slavery and gave the world education; and I say this knowing well that H. G. Wells has endorsed the Christian claim. No one admires Wells' ability and service to this generation more than I do, but here he made, or borrowed, a statement which he had never examined. The undisputed historical facts are that:

(1) The Greek and Roman moralists perceived the injustice of slavery, often denounced it, and rendered great services to the slave.

(2) No Christian leader denounced slavery until the ninth century, when the age of slavery was over.

(3) In the Christian Middle Ages the workers were far worse off, because nearly everyone was a serf, and serfdom was slavery under another name.

(4) The betterment of the condition of the workers has been won quite independently of religion and to an enormous extent in spite of the churches.

Let me underline a truth which is a simple historical fact. *There have in history been two great periods of benevolence and social services: one was under the pagan Stoics and the other is under modern paganism.* The Christian Era lies between these two paganisms, and it has as poor a record of social service as one can imagine. By the first century the Stoics openly condemned slavery. Other Greek moralists besides the Stoics condemned it. Plutarch condemned it. Epicurus had come near to condemning it three centuries earlier when he had defined the slave as "a friend in an inferior condition"; and the Epicurean Hegesias had maintained that slaves were the equals of free men. Florentinus and Ulpian, the two famous Stoic jurists, declared that the enslavement of a man was against the law of nature, the supreme standard of the Stoic. Seneca insisted that the slaves were our "lowly friends," and he pleaded repeatedly and nobly for them. Pliny shows us in his letters that by the second century the slaves were very humanely treated even on provincial estates. Juvenal fiercely attacked inhumanity to slaves.

Yet I presume that all that any religious reader is likely to know about Roman slavery is that the rich patricians had large armies of slaves on their estates and treated them like cattle. He is never told that this refers to the early period of Roman expansion, and that before the end of the first century the slaves were protected by law.

He has probably heard how Cato made some callous remark about his slaves; and he is not told that the pagan writer who has preserved it for us gives it expressly as an instance of "a mean and ungenerous spirit."

THE GOSPEL AND THE SLAVE

There can be no doubt that, if the Roman Empire had continued and developed normally, slavery would have been abolished. Abolition would, as every American knows, have been a colossal task. It would have been far more terrible in Rome than in the southern States, because the entire empire rested to a great extent upon slave-labor. The immense privileges even of the Roman working men were based upon the labor of slaves in the provinces.

Yet public feeling was profoundly affected by the Stoic principle, and the "manumission" of slaves—the grant or sale of freedom to them—was a daily occurrence. Even before Christ this liberation proceeded on so large a scale that the Emperor Augustus checked it for a time, on political grounds. The Stoics urged it and facilitated it, and the final term of the movement was certain.

Rome, however, fell upon evil days just at the time when the humanitarian gospel was accepted. The manhood of Italy, then of the provinces, was almost exhausted in war. The empire was so vast, its frontiers so far-flung, that the military burden was terrible; and frontier-wars naturally increased as the military forces weakened. The third century was one of great poverty and confusion. In the fourth century there was a recovery, but the empire was bleeding to death, and new formidable forces were advancing upon it.

Early in the fifth century it fell. The great slave-owners, the imperial estates and the wealthy Romans, were ruined. The whole economic system was shattered. The old slaves were not "freed": they found themselves free. No one "broke their fetters." They had no fetters. But the barbarians slew or sent into exile the owners, destroyed the connection of the provinces with Rome, and wrecked the administration of the estates. The slaves dispersed and there were now no Roman troops to prevent them.

Thus we can write the history of *ancient* slavery without any reference to Christianity. If it were not for this religious controversy which perverts the facts of history, the Christian religion would hardly be noticed in any complete and impartial study of Roman slavery. All that would be noted would be that some of the Christian emperors of the fourth century issued edicts about the condition of slaves; though they are much less important than the great measures of the pagan emperors. It would then be recorded that the new Christian masters of Europe, petty princes, bishops, abbots, and land-owners, continued to use slave-labor. But it was comparatively easy to deal with this new kind of slavery, and Christendom, tardily recognizing a little of the Stoic ethic, turned it into serfdom: which would have horrified the Stoics.

How, then, has this persistent belief that Christianity broke the fetters of the slave originated and been maintained? Naturally, in the same way as the belief that the Church emancipated woman. It is a quite modern belief. Until recent times nobody cared two pins about the social services of religion. Its business was to save souls. When men could no longer be prevented from attaching importance to social interests, however, the cry arose that religion was just the thing to serve us. The history of the past was caricatured. Already everybody believed that the era before Christ was dark and impotent, and the Christian Era brought a wonderful transformation. Part of this transformation, it was now said, was the uplifting of woman, the emancipation of the slave, the opening of schools, the purification of morals, the beginning of charity, and so on. Neither preachers nor their hearers read the facts of ancient history.

What is there in the Bible that even tends to discourage or condemn slavery? Not a word from cover to cover. Apologists manage to find a word or two which they can twist into a desperate defense of woman, but there is not a single phrase, of Jehovah or Jesus or Paul, that they can, with all their ingenuity, represent as a condemnation of slavery or war, the two most colossal evils of the ancient world.

As I have said, one of the ablest of the apologists actually turns this silence of the Bible into a piece of high diplomacy. Jesus did not want to cause the economic ruin of the empire, so he did not condemn slavery! How religious readers permit such stuff to be presented to them one cannot imagine.

Throughout the Bible slavery is as cheerfully and leniently assumed as are war, poverty, and royalty. In the English Bible there is frequent mention, especially in the parables, of "servants." The Greek word is generally "slaves." Jesus talks about them as coolly as we talk about our housemaids or nurses. Naturally, he would say that we must love them: we must love all men (unless they reject our ideas). But there is not a syllable of condemnation of the institution of slavery. Fornication is a shuddering thing; but the slavery of fifty or sixty million human beings is not a matter for strong language. Paul approves the institution of slavery in just the same way. He is, in fact, worse than Jesus. He saw slaves all over the Greco-Roman world and he never said a word of protest.

As to the customary quibble, that these reforms were "implied" in the teaching of Jesus, it reminds me of Disraeli's famous joke. Asked his religion, he (being a Rationalist, yet a politician) said that he held "the religion of every sensible man." And to the question what that was, he replied that no sensible man ever tells. It reminds me also of the great achievement of Pope Leo XIII, who at last (in the eighteenth century of Papal

power) found the courage to declare that the worker was entitled to "a living wage." But when the clergy found that working men of the nineteenth century were not so easily duped by phrases, and wanted to know what *was* a living wage, the Pope refused to answer the questions privately submitted to him.

Here is another historical truth to underline: *For eight hundred years no Christian leader condemned slavery.* And here is one for the Roman Catholic: *No Pope ever condemned slavery.* In Rome the Pope saw more slavery than in any other city in the world. The life of Rome was based upon the labor of millions of slaves in the provinces. All the dreadful things quoted about pagan slavery are from Roman writers. And no Pope ever uttered a syllable of condemnation of slavery.

Negative statements are a little dangerous. I borrowed this statement, that no Christian writer condemned slavery until the ninth century, from Ingram's "Slavery and Serfdom," which is the best authority on the subject. Then I waited for the reply. It came in a shabby booklet or pamphlet from the Christian Evidence Society; and it reminded me of the Irishman's complaint about his sandwich, that there was "so much mustard for so little mate." In quite a fury of righteous indignation the clerical writer exposed my "lies" to the contempt of the Christian world. He had found—or he confessed that some industrious theologian had found for him—*one* Christian condemnation of slavery in those eight hundred years!

Now, I did not profess to have read every page of every Christian work for eight centuries. I know the Migne collection of this literature as well as anybody, and have spent, in all, many weary months over it. But it was fair to assume that theologians would long ago have quoted Christian condemnations of slavery, if there were any; and none had appeared. The great search now yielded a sort of condemnation of slavery in a work ascribed to Gregory of Nyssa, one of the least influential of the Fathers. How I would have treasured that solitary gem; but, alas, it was spurious. The authorship of the work is disputed, and the author, whoever he is, does not so much condemn slavery as an unjust institution, but attacks all holding of property, including slaves.

The true and typical attitude of the churchman is seen in Pope "St. Gregory the Great." Possibly some Catholic may be surprised at my effrontery in quoting Gregory. Did he not say in one of his letters that all men are "born free," that slaves are only such by "the law of nations," and that it is proper to free slaves? Oh, yes. I know the letter well: much better than the Catholic writers (and even Ingram, who, being a Positivist, favors the Church when he can) who quote it. The Pope is writing to two of his slaves. He is giving them their freedom. But this is the little sup-

pressed fact—they have inherited money, and Gregory secures the money for the Church!

Pope Gregory, my Catholic friend, was the greatest slave-owner in the world in the sixth century. Announcing that the end of the world was to come in 600 A. D., he kindly allowed land-owners and slave-owners to hand over their property to the Church—God would not damn the Church for its wealth—and enter monasteries. The Papacy soon had an income from land, of about two million dollars a year; a stupendous sum in those impoverished days. Enormous numbers of slaves tilled the eighteen hundred square miles of the Church's property. Gregory freed them occasionally: when they got money. *He never condemned slavery.* He would not allow any slave to become a cleric, and he expressly reaffirmed (Epp. vii, 1) that no slave could marry a free Christian.

THE CHURCHES AND THE WORKERS

Back of all these quibbles and squabbles about Jesus and Paul, Gregory of Nyssa and Wulstan, William Wilberforce and Lloyd Garrison, is a poignant and immense human tragedy. It is the larger part of the tragedy of human history which Winwood Reade called the "Martyrdom of Man." It was bad enough in pagan days but humanity, in Europe, was then young and had to learn wisdom. It was worse a thousand years later, when nine-tenths of Europe were serfs. It was still terrible at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In one of my most recent books, "A Century of Stupendous Progress," I have shown that the workers of England, a hundred years ago worked on the average at least fourteen hours a day, six days a week, for an average wage of certainly less than three dollars a week; that most of the children of England over the age of six (and many under it), of both sexes, worked twelve or thirteen hours a day, six days a week, for about two cents a day; that the conditions of workshop and home were vile beyond description, that holidays were only two days a year besides Sundays, that food was dear and of the poorest description, and that manners were correspondingly brutal and morals rare. I proved this from contemporary documents, and no one doubts it. The British worker was then, it is true, in a slightly worse position than the American worker, but he was better off than any other worker in the world.

I invite the reader to get that point clearly. In the year 1826 nine-tenths of the men of Europe, and a very high proportion of the women, worked ninety hours a week, in filthy conditions, under brutal masters, for a little over two and a half dollars a week. They lived mainly on bread, potatoes and water. Meat, milk, sugar, tea and fruit they rarely tasted. Not five in a hundred

of them could read or write. Their amusements were of the coarsest description. Their sex morals were atrocious. Yet they were no worse off than in previous centuries of the Christian Era. Professor Rogers' "Six Centuries of Work and Wages" shows that for England, and Brissot's "Histoire du Travail" shows it for Europe generally. And at that time Christianity had dominated Europe for more than a thousand years.

There is the full irony of the Christian claim. It emancipated the slaves, you say. It did not; but in any case it created the new slavery of serfdom and later the martyrdom of the black race. It emancipated the serfs, you protest. It did not; but it witnessed the evolution of the serfs into these "free" workers of a century ago, brutalized by excessive labor, shut out from all knowledge, deprived of the least voice in the control of their own affairs. It is a mockery to talk about the social service of Christianity, to remind us how it taught the brotherhood of man.

But we have to complete our study by finding who *did* help the workers of the world to reach a higher level.

In the first place, the Reformation did nothing for them. There had already begun a movement in the life of Europe—a movement quite distinct from Christianity and hostile to it—which was the first flush of a new dawn, upon the Dark Ages. The Moors of Spain had given Christendom an object lesson in civilization: the Humanists of the Renaissance conjured up before it the long-buried civilizations of Greece and Rome.

But the Reformation, necessary and important as it was, was a reaction both in culture and social idealism.

Luther and his colleagues primarily sought to concentrate the attention of men on the Bible and on their immortal souls. You are proud of it? Very good; but you cannot have your bread buttered on both sides. The more a man cares for our immortal souls, the less he cares about our mortal bodies.

At first Luther showed a human concern about the exploitation of the mass of the people. A German noble had said contemptuously of the German peasants—then the great majority of the nation: "They will never rise unless you cut a slice off their buttocks"—to put it as politely as possible. They rose, however, and they claimed Luther's sympathy. After some hesitation he harshly condemned the insurrection. He discovered that the Bible ordered them to be "subject to all higher authorities." In July, 1624, he wrote to the nobles of Saxony: "They must be crushed, strangled, and spitted, wherever it is possible, because a mad dog has to be killed." He defended serfdom, saying that to abolish it would be "against the gospels and robbery." In later years he wrote: "All their blood is on my head, but I leave it to the Lord God, who bade me speak thus." Melanchthon was no better. He said: "The Germans are always such ill-bred, perverse, blood-

thirsty folk that they must be kept down more stringently than ever." Eccardus, in his "Geschichte des niederen Volkes," is quite candid about the kind of "brotherhood" which the great Reformers learned from their profound study of the Gospels.

If any change is claimed by any historian of labor, it is that during the three centuries after the Reformation the condition of the workers grew steadily worse. Let not the Catholic rejoice, however. It was just the same in Catholic and Protestant lands, as Brissot shows in his "Histoire du Travail." There were economic causes of this which we cannot discuss here. As to religion, we have only to say that bishops and priests continued their absolute and universal indifference to the martyrdom of the mass of the race. Strong language? Name, if you can, who acted otherwise.

The first attempt at reforms was made by the French Revolution. This at once conjures up visions of bloodshed and orgies in the minds of religious readers, who read about it only in religious works, hear about it in sermons, and see it on the screen. The horrors were mainly due to the later revolutionaries, and the first half of the French Revolution was a sober and beneficent movement led almost entirely by Rationalists. The way had been prepared for its best work by the great Rationalists, or Encyclopedists, of the eighteenth century. Voltaire had been concerned mainly with superstition, though he has a fine record of humanitarian service, but the later and more radical unbelievers, just before the Revolution, were strong humanitarians; and they were all what we now call Agnostics or Materialists. The early leaders of the Revolution—Mirabeau, Talleyrand, Sieyès, Lafayette, Desmoulins, Mounier, Danton, Petion and Barnave—merely developed their ideas; and all these men in turn were either Deists or Agnostics. A Christian like the Abbé Gregoire was a very rare bird amongst the revolutionaries; and he was angrily disowned by the Church.

Again let me ask the religious reader to look at this broad and uncontroverted situation frankly. The millions of workers of France were in a lamentable plight. Twenty million people lived on the land, owned only two-fifths of it, and bore an intolerable burden of taxes for Church and State. Two hundred thousand priests, monks, and nuns owned a fifth of the land, and paid no taxes. Yet all these exponents of the Gospel had for ages ignored the condition of the people and the gross injustice of their rulers, and only a few of the common clergy, sons of the people themselves, joined in the sound part of the Revolution. It was a handful of skeptics, of Atheists and Materialists and Voltaireans, who gave the world the creed of the Rights of Man. Remember this the next time you hear an eloquent sermon on the horrible possibilities of Materialism. Remember, too, that the Stoics, the only

previous body of idealists who had moved the world, were Materialists.

The work of the Revolution was murdered. Church and Royalty combined to put their white hands round the neck of humanity. America, fortunately, had won independence of Europe, and the reaction did not spread to the United States. But the White Terror, ironically calling itself "the Holy Alliance," spread over the whole of Europe. The workers sank back into the dark and sullen attitude from which the clarion call of the Revolution had momentarily raised them. Not a priest or minister of the Gospel in the world pleaded for them. Remember that also when next you are invited to compare the fruits of Christianity and Materialism.

In the recent work of mine to which I have referred, "A Century of Stupendous Progress," I have proved that the world has made more progress in the last hundred years—economically, socially, morally and intellectually—than in the previous fourteen hundred years of Christian power. One of the most distinguished living British economists, Sir Josiah Stamp, says that the British worker of today is four times as well off as the worker of a century ago. I have proved that this is true, in every respect; and it is true of civilization generally. Who did it?

If we were to argue in the manner of religious writers, the answer would be prompt and simple. Skepticism, of course. The new force in the world was Rationalism. Christianity had been tried for fourteen centuries and had failed dismally. The only thing that I can imagine any sincere and informed person saying for it is that it saved the souls of a large number of men. He could not even say that it improved the morals of Europe. Well, we have much doubt today even about the saving of souls, but assuredly it did not save bodies. Then Rationalism appeared, and—the world leaped onward and made far more progress in a century than it had done in fourteen centuries.

But we do not follow the clerical standard of argumentation. We must analyze patiently. And it becomes at once apparent that science did most of the work. I should scarcely have the patience to discuss here the opinion of any man who claimed that the Church gave the world science, so we will leave it that the extraordinary increase of wealth and comfort was due to secular science. We have, however, to inquire how it was that the workers and the small middle class secured so much from this new wealth, as I have shown in my book. Science has nothing to say to the distribution of wealth.

Next, education was the great redeeming force. Education was won for the mass of the people mainly by Rationalism, in spite of the Churches.

In short, the real question from our present point of view is:

In what proportion were the social idealists who got these new forces applied to the uplifting of the workers Christians, and in what proportion were they non-Christian or anti-Christian? And please remember the perspective of the question. At the end of the eighteenth century perhaps five percent of the world was Rationalist and ninety-five percent Christian. In the hard period from 1820 to 1840, when the work entailed heavy sacrifices, perhaps ten percent of Europe was Rationalist and ninety percent Christian. From 1840 to 1880, still a desperate period for idealists, the Christians were at least in a majority of seventy or eighty percent. In our time they are, taking one advanced country with another, in a minority of thirty to forty percent.

And the historical facts show that of those social idealists with whom I am here concerned—not mere philanthropists like Howard or Elizabeth Fry, or workers in very narrow field like Shaftesbury, but men and women who fought for the betterment of the workers as a mass—the overwhelming majority were Rationalists at a time when Rationalists were only five or ten percent of the whole community; that the great majority were still Rationalists in the second half of the nineteenth century; and that it is only in recent times, when reform movements were successful and the Churches were losing members very heavily, that we have discovered such a thing as social idealism and "social experts" in the Christian bodies.

For England, in the first period, the men and women of most influence were Paine, Byron, Shelley, Priestley, Horne, Tooke, Erasmus, Darwin, Godwin, Hardy, Holcroft, and Mary Wollstonecraft. Hardy's opinion about religion is not recorded. Priestley was a Unitarian: which was not then regarded as Christian. Not one of the others was a Christian.

The reaction against the French Revolution hardened the Churches in their attitude toward reform. The bishops of the English Church opposed all reform. Lord Brougham, noticing that they avoided supporting even a temperance bill, said fierily that "only two out of six-and-twenty Right Reverend Prelates will sacrifice their dinner and their regard for their belly—to attend and vote." Lord Shaftesbury angrily described the clergy—and he was a bigoted Christian—as "timid, time-serving, and great worshipers of wealth and power." "I can," he said, "scarcely remember an instance in which a clergyman has been found to maintain the cause of laborers in the face of pew-holders." I take the quotation from "The Bishops as Legislators," by Joseph Clayton, a devout member of the Church of England; and his book is a scorching indictment of his Church. He praises Shaftesbury at least; but Shaftesbury opposed every reform movement except his own, in favor of children, and he was so hated by the workers of London that he had to barricade his house against them. In short,

one Wesleyan clergyman, Stephens, and late in the nineteenth century one Anglican clergyman, Kingsley, worked for reform; and their Churches persecuted them. That is the record for more than half a century.

I have in my "Church and the People" given the full evidence for my statements. When reform was arduous, very few Christian laymen figured in it. They and their clergy swarmed into it when it became successful, and the workers were deserting the churches in millions. All over Europe—there was not the same battle to fight in the United States—the great fighters were anti-Christian in the overwhelming majority. As to the Papacy, which now says flattering things to the workers of America, the kind of thing a young man says to a young lady who has inherited a fortune, it has the blackest record of any section of Christendom. It murdered, as long as the world would allow it, those who fought for the rights of man. So had Christianity done from the first. The present-day claims of its apologists are like a row of haggard women whom you place, unpainted and unpowdered, under the blaze of our modern arc lamps.

CHAPTER XX

The Church and the School

The Moral Value of Education—The Child Under Paganism—Education in the Roman Empire—What the Church Did—Learning in the Middle Ages

The Moral Value of Education

"YOU have one argument that seriously troubles me," said a distinguished and earnest Christian to me some years ago; "the fact that the world steadily improves while religion steadily decays."

That fact must perplex every religious man or woman who looks out upon the world without tinted glasses. I claim and I can conclusively establish, that there was never before on this earth as fine a generation as this unbelieving generation of ours; that character is finest in the least religious countries, and especially in the cities where the men and women who worship God are in a minority; and that those generous impulses which make our age, with all its defects, the happiest and most refined that ever was, arise from humanitarian, not Christian, sentiment.

Even writers who are not Christian have been puzzled by this seeming paradox. Forty years ago a Positivist writer, Mr. J. Cotter Morison, wrote a fine and learned work ("The Service of Man") in which he hailed the coming of "the kingdom of man" which he saw succeeding "the kingdom of God," but he thought that the world would have to pay a price for the change. "Signs are not wanting," he said, "that the prevalent anarchy in thought is leading to anarchy in morals."

This sentence was much quoted by clerical writers, as a Rationalist admission of our degeneracy, but it is just one of those sentences which show the foolishness of making concessions to the religious apologist. Not only does Cotter Morison fail to point out these "signs," but the whole of the contents of his valuable work support the opposite conclusion. The book is one long exposure of the moral futility of Christianity. It examines "morality in the ages of faith" (Chap. vii) very thoroughly and mercilessly, and to speak of us as immoral in comparison with those ages is simply amusing. Fifty pages after declaring that our skepticism is engen-

dering some "anarchy in morals" our moralist, when he comes to face the facts, writes such sentences as these:

> The Ages of Faith were emphatically ages of crime, of gross and scandalous wickedness, of cruelty, and, in a word, of immorality. And it is noteworthy that, in proportion as we recede backward from the present age, and return into the Ages of Faith, we find that the faith rises steadily as we penetrate into the past, almost with the regularity which marks the rise of the physical temperature of the air as we descend into a deep mine; but a neglect and defiance of morality are found to ascend into a corresponding ratio. . . . A progressive improvement has taken place in men's conduct, both public and private; but it has coincided, not with an increase, but with a decay, of faith. *This, beyond any question, is the most moral age which the world has seen* (p. 53).

Every theorist about our degeneration thus breaks down when he confronts the facts, and it is misleading to quote the mere rhetoric of the Positivist writer without adding the exact historical statements which follow. The same thing is found in Lecky's books; and the clergy, of course, quote the sentiments and ignore the facts.

Here I would point out that, if this most delicate of critics agrees with me that "this is the most moral age which the world has seen," yet inconsistently talks of moral anarchy, which ought to mean the collapse of a better order, it shows that there is a widespread feeling that the decay of religion might be expected to entail such anarchy.

And an important part of the answer to this suspicion, or the solution of this dilemma, is the moral influence of education. The ages of faith were ages of gross ignorance: ours is the best educated age upon which the sun has ever shone. The sanest thinker that America has yet produced, Lester F. Ward, predicted long ago that general education would raise the race to a higher moral level, in every sound sense of the word "moral." Today no man can question the truth of the principle he enunciated.

This at once casts upon the Christian Church a peculiar responsibility in regard to education. No one will question that very ignorant men and women may have high character, and that very cultured individuals may have a low standard of conduct. It has been my good fortune to meet every variety of character, of every color of skin, every degree of wealth or poverty, ignorance or learning; and I know as well as any what fineness of disposition and manliness of spirit may be found in a thousand-dollar cottage, what mean and sordid ways may go with complete education. Yet the general truth is inexorable. A nation that is grossly ignorant to the extent of ninety percent of its people is generally a gross nation. Reduce its illiteracy to ten percent, and its general standard of conduct rises.

Since this truth has been perceived, there is the usual eagerness to claim that the Christian Church long ago knew and acted upon

it. Christianity gave the world schools, says H. G. Wells. Christianity is "the best friend that learning ever had," Mr. William Jennings Bryan wrote in his last speech. From extreme right to extreme left of the religious world the claim is made. And just as I have shown the falseness of the Church's claim to have emancipated woman and the slave, so I propose now to show that this claim also is the precise reverse of the truth. The facts of history prove that:

(1) The pagan power to which Christianity succeeded in Europe had already given the world a fine general system of education.

(2) Christianity contemplated the complete ruin of this school-system without a murmur, indeed applauded its disappearance, and made no effort to replace it.

(3) So little was done in the way of education during the thousand years of absolute Christian domination that more than ninety percent of the people in every Christian nation were illiterate and densely ignorant.

(4) The modern school-systems which have opened the eyes of the masses and enabled them to rise are due entirely to secular sentiment, and their development was in most cases opposed and retarded by the Churches.

I wish there were some recording angel who could lay at the august feet of the Pope and his cardinals a veracious chronicle of what women, workers, and children have suffered since the end of the fourth century. We saw how woman fell with the fabric of Roman law, and had to wait for modern skepticism to end her long degradation. We saw how the workers passed from slavery to serfdom and from serfdom to the degraded and degrading conditions in which the nineteenth century found them.

Who will tell what children have suffered since the golden eagles of Rome were thrown into the dust for priests to trample upon? "Children are the guests of humanity," said the Rationalist Robert Owen, beautifully. But there was, you protest, no need for Robert Owen to discover that, for every Christian in the world had the equally beautiful words of Christ . . . . Yes, I know. Yet, somehow, what Robert Owen found, eighteen hundred years after Christ had spoken, was that most of the children of the Christian nation in which he lived suffered hell. There was a blanched look, the pallor of the slave, on the face of the nation's childhood. At the age of six or seven such of them as had survived the ghastly perils and illnesses of the dreary, drainless home and the fetid street were sent to work; and when twelve hours work a day, in a suffocating atmosphere, were too much for their young frames, no one then stayed the hand that laid a leather strap or an iron bar upon their shoulders.

That was the factory system, you protest. It was recent. Had they, then, been in paradise before? From the fifth to the nineteenth

century half of them died before they knew the strong joy of early manhood and womanhood. Four out of eight were laid in "God's acre"— the cynicism of it!—before their hearts had known more than the scanty and trivial pleasures of a child in the world of serfdom.

Did you ever see Maurice Maeterlinck's beautiful symbolic play "The Blue Bird"? How one would love to think that his pretty land of memory, where the dead children played in never-fading sunshine, were a real heaven somewhere for those countless millions of children who have been martyred during the last fifteen hundred years. But there is no heaven. Their little bones are dust. Their souls never grew to maturity.

If by some miracle those children of the past could peep into our world they would say that the paradise of children had come at last. Our life is dreary enough for the children of the poor. But there is a concern for the child, a care of the child, a protection of the child from cruelty, a provision of entertainment, a crusade against disease, a scattering of little pleasures, which were never known in the world before. Surely a dreadful age, this godless age of ours!

I said "never known in the world before," and it must follow that paganism had not these things. We must admit it. This generation of ours has advanced beyond any earlier generation, especially in that most refined mark of unselfish character, the service to children.

In justice both to Christianity and to paganism we must remember that it is science that has done most to brighten the life of the child, and neither of them had science. We may justly ask how it was that the world had to wait fifteen centuries for the development of those germs of science which appeared in early Greece, but that is another question. Our world is not merely willing, but able, to do for the child what no previous civilization could have done, even if it had dreamed of the ideal. The wealth alone created by modern science is colossal. The United States has a little more than the population which the Roman Empire had in its best days; but it has hundreds of times the collective wealth of the Roman Empire. Education, as we have it, was not possible until our time.

Thus even what is called the materialistic triumph of our age has a most important relation to our general standard of character. It has enabled us to create an educational system which will, when its errors are eliminated, when it becomes entirely practical and is freed from pedantry and academic nonsense, lift the race to a still higher level. It has made possible philanthropic schemes which dwarf all the "charity" of previous ages. Yet when one has made every allowance for our greater resources it remains true that we have, since we began to discard Christianity, a finer and more

generous feeling as well as a surplus of wealth. Christianity wrought woman actual evil; it did nothing for the mass of the workers; and what it pretends to have done for the child we find to have been as illusory as all its other social claims.

THE CHILD UNDER PAGANISM

Any properly informed apologist will at this point take down his copy of Lecky's "History of European Morals," and he would like to make me blush by confronting me with the admissions of that learned Rationalist historian. George Eliot once maliciously said that Lecky's fundamental principle was: "Two and two certainly make four, but it does not do to press these things too far." Many people follow that amiable maxim, but the witticism is not quite just to Lecky. Nearer the truth is the remark which an American consul once made to me: that Lecky tried so hard to stand up straight that he occasionally fell backward. His compliments to the Christian Church are almost always undone by the facts he gives.

Lecky dwells on the three services of the new religion to the child which the more cultivated apologist would claim. In point of fact, I am not sure that there is any apologist sufficiently informed to abandon the common claim that Christianity gave the world education; although—I ask the reader who has access to a decent library to verify this, as it must seem impossible—*there is not one authoritative manual of the history of education* (Kapps, Denk, Paroz, Letourneau, Compayré, Seeley, Boyd, etc.) *which does not make that claim ridiculous.* However, apart from education, the apologist will warmly plead that Christianity rendered to the child three mighty services by abolishing the practices of abortion, the exposure of children, and infanticide.

I shall not linger long over abortion. It is generally to be deprecated on the ground of health and risk. It may in a nation with a shrinking population (which no nation now has) have a social aspect. But it is not (except legally) a crime or a vice. The Fathers of the Church put it on a level with murder because they thought that the foetus had an immortal soul. We don't. In our age it ought not to be practiced to any great extent because science has provided contraceptives. In the ancient world it was inevitable; and even in our world I should call any theologian who forbade an unfortunate unmarried girl to resort to it a moral pervert.

But I dismiss the point briefly because there is not the least positive evidence that the Church even reduced the practice. The Fathers condemned it, certainly. There was not much in connection with sex that they did not condemn. The Stoics also condemned it. Lecky himself—though he unfortunately leaves all his Stoic quotations in Latin, so that the clergy cannot read them—shows that Seneca, Juvenal and others condemned it. He quotes Favorinus

saying that abortion deserves "public detestation and the hatred of all men." One association of doctors in Rome compelled its members to swear that they would never give drugs for abortion. But neither Christian nor pagan ever succeeded in putting a stop to it. All through the ages it has continued. Even now, when preventives are known to everybody . . . . I will give only one fact. In a very large American city, where a third of the population are Catholics (forbidden to use preventives), a man of exceptional information in such matters told me that two hundred physicians of the city practiced abortion and were sufficiently organized to disarm the curiosity of the police.

The exposure of children and infanticide were real evils of the pagan world. The old Roman law did not reach across the threshold of a man's house. The father had power of life and death over his wife, his children, and his slaves. The new-born child was brought to him, and he decided whether he would "receive it into the family." If he refused to take the baby-girl in his arms, she was taken out of the house and laid in a public place, where slave-dealers or baby-farmers found and reared it. Legally the father could have her stifled.

This was barbaric: a relic of the barbaric days of the Romans, which were not far away. But the preacher who imagines Roman fathers callously killing their baby-girls, or flinging them out into the street, until the Christian Church became powerful enough to intervene, simply does not know what he is talking about. Even scholars who ought to know better grossly exaggerate the situation. Dr. Fairbairn, for instance, shudderingly says of the pagan children: "The very sense of their rights was not yet born: the feeling of obligation toward them waited on the footsteps of Christ." He impresses his religious readers by giving a reference to Mommsen, the greatest authority on the Roman Republic. If they troubled to look up Mommsen ("Roman History," i, 74), which they never do, they would find this: "The moral obligations of parents toward their children were fully and deeply felt by the Roman nation." Any authority will tell you that. Dr. Emil Reich, the Protestant writer on Rome, says ("History of Civilization," p. 371): "It would be the easiest thing in the world to accumulate examples of the most tender charity practiced by these immoral Romans." Strange if they slew their baby-girls and then showed a most tender charity to other people's children.

Let us take infanticide, which is far more serious than abortion. Most critics of pagan Rome would refer us to Lecky's "History," where it is described as "one of the deepest stains of the ancient civilization" and "a crying vice of the empire" (ii, 12). The apologist stops there. It is enough for pulpit purposes. But it is constructive lying to quote these phrases alone.

What Lecky says is that "pagan and Christian writers

united in speaking of infanticide as a crying vice of the empire." We pass the Christian writers. They called abortion infanticide. But who are the pagan authorities, and are they merely speaking rhetorically? Knowing how Lecky, who is always sound in his facts, has a weakness for saying things which religious readers like, we are not very much surprised to find that he does not give a single pagan authority for his strong statement; and it is his custom to give his authorities most liberally in footnotes.

He quotes two writers of *fiction* (the comedian Terence and the story-writer Apuleius) each of whom makes one of his characters direct his wife to kill a new-born baby girl; and in each occasion, even in fiction, the wife is too humane to do it! Then he quotes Seneca and certain Greek writers saying, with approval, that "portentous" or "weak and monstrous" new-born babes—monstrosities, in short, or defective babies—are and ought to be destroyed. There are plenty of very humane men and doctors who say the same today.

Lecky does not give any evidence that the theoretical right of the Roman father to kill was ever exercised to any extent. He says that "infanticide never appears to have been common in Rome till the corrupt and sensual days of the Empire." He gives no evidence that it was common in those days, and he adds: "The legislators then absolutely condemned it." In fact, on the very same page he writes this passage, which ought to be studied by every apologist:

> The power of life and death, which in Rome was originally conceded to the father over his children, would *appear* to involve an unlimited permission of infanticide; but a very old law, popularly ascribed to Romulus, in this respect restricted the parental rights, enjoining the father to bring up all his male children, and at least his eldest female child, forbidding him to destroy any well-formed child till it had completed its third year, when the affection of the parent might be supposed to be developed, but permitting the exposition of deformed or maimed children with the consent of their five nearest relations.

Not so barbaric, after all! In fact, Lecky himself gives a case under Augustus—that is to say, "in the corrupt and sensual days of the empire"—of a father using his legal right to execute a delinquent son, and he says that the act provoked the indignation of Rome. The Emperor Hadrian banished a man who had killed his son for adultery with his step-mother; and the Stoic lawyer Marcianus praised the emperor, saying that "the power of a father should be displayed in affection, not atrocity." In fine, we have this singular situation which Lecky notices without a smile, that one of the commonest ways of provoking a pagan mob *against the Christians* was to accuse them of infanticide! Strange, if infanticide was one of the "crying evils" of the pagans themselves, that the mere rumor of it infuriated them.

Apart, therefore, from maimed, deformed, or very feeble

children, whom the Romans had no science to cure, we have no evidence of this alleged prevalence of infanticide. With the exposure of the new-born female babe it was different. But even here it is quite false to say that the pagan moralists did not condemn the practice, or that the Church caused it to be abandoned, or even materially reduced it.

The Stoic lawyers of the first and second centuries tried to prevent exposure by making it equivalent to infanticide. It was no Christian, but the great pagan lawyer Paulus, three centuries before the Church had any influence, who said ("Digest," bk. xxv, title iii, line 4): "Death is inflicted not only by the man who smothers the new-born child, but by him also who casts it away, who denies it food, who exposes it in public places to receive a mercy which he himself does not possess." It was the pagan Emperor Trajan who decreed that an exposed child could not be made a slave; and it was the Christian Emperor Constantine who reversed this law. It was the pagan Emperors Caracalla and Diocletian who attempted to check the traffic in children.

EDUCATION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

By the second half of the fourth century, the period when Christianity took over the rule of the world, there was in the Roman Empire a general system of elementary schools for the children of the workers. The children of the wealthy were, of course, educated at home, generally by freedmen, but all the evidence goes to show that the children of the workers quite generally were, at the expense of the municipality, taught to read and write and cipher.

We have no statistics. How many schools there were even in Rome, how far there were schools in rural districts, what proportion of the population could read and write, are questions that we cannot answer. But we have ample evidence that a network of primary schools spread over the empire. St. Augustine, for instance, was born in 354 A. D. in the very small Roman town of Thogaste, in what is now Algeria. He, as a matter of course, found and attended a free elementary school in his native town, to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. When he had mastered these elementary accomplishments, he passed to the "grammar" (or high) school in the same small Africo-Roman town. His parents intended him for the bar, and he was, at the age of sixteen, sent to a still higher school, the school of rhetoric. Even for this he did not need to go to Carthage. After a few further years he was sent to the great school at Carthage, which might be likened to the modern university.

It is quite clear from Augustine's own words that for this education as such nothing was paid; and we have the decrees of the emperors fixing the salaries which the municipality had to pay

teachers. From this one experience, therefore, we may realize the general condition of the civilized parts of the Roman Empire. Small towns like Thogaste had a free grammar school as well as free elementary schools. Literacy must have been the general condition; and, in fact, ancient Pompeii, with its names cut in marble slabs at every street corner, shows that the people were generally literate.

The elementary school was so poor that we have no difficulty in believing that there was one wherever there were a few score children to each. Quite commonly it was held in the porch of a house, with sheets of canvas at each end, and the teacher received a miserable payment. He usually had some other means of livelihood in addition, yet he was proverbially a poor man. "Cabbage cooked a second time kills wretched schoolmasters," says a famous line of Horace. Such schools could be multiplied all over the empire, and the imperial decrees give us an assurance that they were.

We may, therefore, assume that the great majority of the free citizens of the empire could read and write. In those paperless days writing would not be a matter of much consequence, but it was taught in the elementary school. Tablets coated with wax were used, and one wrote with a stylus, pointed at one end for writing, and broad and flat at the other end for erasing. Simple arithmetic also was taught, and literary men of the time have left us their grumbles at the noise made by the children as they sang their "twice two is four." The Church, in short, came to power in a world where the middle class were gentlemen and the great mass of the workers had at least learned to read and write. In the year 400, when the triumph of Christianity was complete, the leaders of the Church found a complete government system of schools radiating from Rome over the entire empire. Paganism had created those schools. What was the attitude of the Church toward them?

WHAT THE CHURCH DID

In the course of the fifth century this Roman system of schools was entirely destroyed. By the year 400, as I said, Christianity had become, by imperial decree, the sole religion of the empire, which means of the entire civilized world apart from India and China. By the year 500, there was not a single trace left of the pagan structure of schools. No writer on education can prove the existence of a single school in Europe at that date. To say, therefore, that Christianity *gave* the world schools, when its triumph was followed by the annihilation of the finest system of education the world ever had until the second half of the nineteenth century, is a constructive untruth of a monumental character; for there is not the least controversy anywhere about these two facts—that the pagan Romans of the fourth century had a fine system of general

and higher education, and that the whole of it perished in the fifth century.

Although I was for several years a professor, and ultimately head of a college, in the Church of Rome, I then knew nothing whatever about these facts. We merely copied from earlier apologists, and repeated the traditional claim that "Christianity gave the world education." These traditional claims we never dreamed of checking by modern authorities. The preacher who repeats them today is usually honest. They are given to him as part of his clerical education. They occur still, as brazenly as ever, in his apologetic literature. There is not one preacher in a thousand who goes further and inquires if the facts, as given in modern history, support the claims he makes.

LEARNING IN THE MIDDLE AGES

How profound was the night that now enveloped Europe, and how fully the Church was responsible for it, may be gathered from a letter written by Pope Gregory "the Great" to a French bishop. Gregory ruled the Church from 590 to 604 A. D. The triumph of Christianity was now complete. Paganism was very dead; and civilization had almost expired with it. Rome had not been destroyed by the Goths, but it was suffered, decade by decade, to fall into ruin by the forty thousand miserable and grossly ignorant Christians who now moved, like lizards, amongst the moldering buildings that had once housed a million happy, open-eyed folk. Europe at large was correspondingly desolate.

Gregory, who ascended the chair of Peter in 590, was a monk. Ah, the Catholic will say, one of that glorious army of industrious scholars who preserved for all time the treasures of classic literature . . . . We shall see. I would rather point out that Gregory, before he became a monk, had been a Roman patrician, a rich man of the standards of the time, even Prefect of Rome. He was by no means a peasant or an emancipated serf. But what a fall from the patricians of pagan days: refined and cultivated men who would spend hours polishing a short letter to a friend or preparing a public oration.

Gregory expected the end of the world. I tell elsewhere how he laid the foundation of the temporal power and wealth of the Papacy through this fortunate belief of his that the end of the world was really approaching at last. A man with possessions, the Bible said, had as much hope of getting through the eye of a needle as of getting through the narrow gate of heaven. So the men who had large estates in Italy passed them over to the Papacy and looked for the heavens to open. The Pope became a prince; and a few more forgeries, a century later, would make him a king. However, Gregory did believe that the last trumpet would soon sound in the ears of the mortals, and so nothing but virtue mattered. He

heard that Bishop Desiderius, of Vienne in Gaul, was conducting a small school, and he wrote him a letter (Migne edition, bk. XI, ep. liv) of which I may translate a passage:

> After that we heard a thing that cannot be repeated without a feeling of shame—namely, that you are teaching grammar to some. This troubled us so greatly, and filled us with so deep a disdain, that we fell from our former praise of you to mourning and sorrow, because the praise of Jove must never be heard from the mouth that praises Christ. Think how grave and horrible it is for a bishop to repeat what even a religious layman should not. And, though our beloved son the presbyter Candidus denied the affair, at our pressing inquiry, and tried to excuse you, ye have not lost the suspicion, because it is so execrable for this to be said of a priest that it must be strictly investigated.

Desiderius is, in fine, to give up "studying trifles and secular letters" if he is to return to the Pope's favor.

The latest Catholic apologist for the atrocities of his Church, Dr. H. A. Mann, contends in his "Lives of Popes"—a marvelous piece of whitewashing—that Bishop Desiderius had been teaching the classics *in church*. I have translated the relevant passage of the letter in full so that the reader may see for himself that this is a quite unscrupulous defense. The bishop's fault was, pure and simple, that he was teaching "profane letters." This was "execrable," "horrible," etc. The age of education was over. Father Mann tries to support his theory by quoting some praise of secular learning from what he calls Gregory's "Commentary on the First Book of Kings." Even the Benedictine monks who edit Gregory's works admit that this work is spurious. It was written by an admirer who in the main reproduces Gregory's sermons, but—the art of shorthand had been lost, of course—mixes his own ideas with those of the Pope.

After Gregory's death there was a tradition in the Church, reproduced in the "Polycraticus" (ii, 26) of John Salisbury, that the Pope had burned the old Roman libraries which still remained on the Capitoline and the Palatine Hills. I have little doubt that the tradition is correct. Civilization was to be killed. Somehow it meant love, joy, and beauty: things which any saint loathed. In any case, Gregory, the greatest Pope in many centuries, thundered out the orders of the Papacy: no schools. A very tame sort of "profane" culture had been provided by the grammarian Donatus, the teacher of St. Jerome, and it is probably this that the French bishop gave in his schools. In his most famous work, the "Magna Moralia," the largest volume of sheer nonsense ever put together, Gregory pours scorn even on these innocent "rules of Donatus."

Let the reader understand clearly what is meant. I am not speaking of the mass of the people. They remained universally in the densest ignorance. Of schools for *them* there was no question. A bishop of Laon (in France) of the eleventh century says: "There is more than one bishop who cannot name the letters of

the alphabet on his fingers." Ordinary priests had not the slightest understanding of the Latin they mumbled. Even the secretaries of the Papacy at Rome sent out their documents in the most atrocious Latin, full of common grammatical errors. Kings and nobles could not sign their names. Their signatures had to be cut for them in wood and stamped on documents. The illiteracy of Europe had increased to more than ninety-nine percent.

That there were schools for teaching clerics how to read the Bible and the Breviary may be taken for granted, but they were so obscure and paltry that pedagogists can hardly find the names of any of them. As to the monks—I imagine my Catholic reader waiting on tiptoe for me to come to these famous monks of the Middle Ages—their supposed literary activity is as priceless a legend as that of the early martyrs.

The French writer Montalembert is responsible for the myth. His discovery that "every monastery was a school" is still quoted everywhere, though every serious historian of education will tell you that not one monastery in one hundred educated even its own monks. He tells about the fervor for copying manuscripts, the great libraries, of the monks. Why, he says, we know that in one monastery (at Novalese) there were six thousand seven hundred handwritten books! Yes: and at the same time the Moors in Spain had seventy public libraries besides private collections, one of which contained six hundred thousand books. And in pagan days the library of Alexandria had contained seven hundred thousand books. The Julian library at Rome (which, with others, the Pope is said to have burned) contained one hundred and twenty thousand books.

The overwhelming majority of the monasteries of the Middle Ages were colonies of fat and gross sensualists, mainly hypocritical peasants, who could not write their own names. Impossible? In his "History of Pedagogy" Compayré shows that at the close of the thirteenth century, which is supposed to be the most intellectual and scholarly period of the Middle Ages, *not one single monk* in the largest and greatest monastery of France, St. Gall, could read or write! From the days of St. Augustine, who found himself compelled to write a book against monks ("Contra Monachos") within a century of their appearance in Europe, until the Reformation serious Christian literature is full of stern indictments of the piggish idleness and the hypocrisy of the monks.

"Without these [monastic] copyists," says the wonderful Montalembert, "we should possess nothing—absolutely nothing —of classic antiquity." Catholic writers repeat this, and Catholics all over the world have a gloriously vague idea that we owe our Plato and Aristotle and all the Greek works we so justly treasure to the monks of the early Middle Ages. Whereas any expert on the subject will tell you that we owe not one single genuine piece of

Greek literature to the monks, unless it be Aristotle's "Dialectics," which is disputed. Professor Heeren, who has made special research into this question ("Geschichte des Studiums der Klassischen Literatur") says that until the time of Charlemagne (who made the monks work) there was not a monastery in Europe that "rendered any service whatever in connection with classical literature" (p. 101).

Let the Catholic use his own common sense in the matter. Does he really imagine his pious monks spending the hours between their prayers in copying what he calls the obscenities of Apuleius, the amorous verse of Horace, the adventures of the gods and goddesses in Ovid? A moment's reflection will tell him what really happened. Greek literature was preserved in the Greek Empire, and was conveyed to Europe by the Jews and Moors. As to Latin literature, genuinely religious monasteries regarded it, like Tertullian, as "inspired by the devil," and would not look at it; and the great bulk of the monasteries were too gross and ignorant to do any copying. (Fortunately, in every age there was an abbot or a bishop here and there who loved a cup of wine and a maid as well as Horace did, and they preserved the treasure for us.) Copies even of the Latin classics were exceedingly rare in the Middle Ages, Heeren shows, although a parchment-book lasted practically forever.

Where the monks did spend any part of their time in "the writing room," they were, naturally, copying the Fathers of the Church and later Christian literature. In a corner of the great British National Library at London there is a full collection (the Migne collection) of the works of the Fathers, Latin and Greek: five or six hundred large quarto volumes of closely printed . . . . what shall I call it? No one seems to approach this gallery of literary fossils except myself. It is all waste paper from the modern point of view. And that is almost all we owe to the famous monks. Heeren insists that they destroyed more classical works than the barbarians did.

CHAPTER XXI

The Dark Ages

The Making of the Middle Ages—The Morals of the New Europe—The Iron Age—The Blight of Life

The Making of the Middle Ages

ONE Sunday morning in the year 1922 I stood for an hour closely packed in a crowd of Bulgar peasants. We were at the frontier railway depot, at six in the morning. It was the festival of some ancient saint as well as a Sunday; and from the Serb side hundreds of peasants were crossing into their native Bulgaria for a day. They were mostly women, in spotless white linen and gaudily embroidered vests and skirts. Even the few men were sober, at that hour. But . . . I looked into the scores of pairs of eyes all round me and wondered. They were the eyes of their cattle, lit by a dull gleam, a dawn, of human kindliness and intelligence; and in their depths one could see or surmise slumbering passions which cattle never know.

From depot to depot along the slow route the train emptied and refilled with such crowds. As the hours passed, the gait of the men grew unsteadier and their raucous voices louder, and the laughter of the women rang out over the idle fields.

For lunch I had to pass through their third-class coach. A burly assistant literally rammed a narrow way for me through the sweating mass. They were too happy to grumble. One man had a big drum on the train. They were packed four to the square yard. The aroma of strong native wine clung like a mist. The bovine eyes now shone with animal vitality. The gaping, roaring mouths of the men, the faint pretense of reserve in the women's laughter, the mutual glances of the little girls, told the nature of the jokes that were thundered above the babel.

On the previous Sunday I had been in Vienna: one of the loveliest, most captivating, most urbane and refined cities on the globe. In a week I had passed back from 1922 to 922 or thereabouts: from modern times to the Middle Ages.

There has been a queer movement of civilization in the course of time. Once all civilization flourished round the Mediterranean Sea. The "Mediterranean Race" was the great race. Beyond the Alps, beyond the Danube, were mere barbarians. They seemed

as unlikely as the Negroes south of the Sahara ever to build cities and write philosophies. But civilization passed to "the great white race," and round the Mediterranean were only beggarly remnants of the ancient peoples, as idly contemplating the ruins of their former greatness as the sheep and goats that browsed amongst the marble columns.

Worn-out stocks, you may say: exhausted national germplasms, and so on. Those are words: "wind of words and nothing more," as the realistic old Romans used to say. The outstanding characteristic of those masses of peasants of southern Europe is their immense vitality. They work from sun-up to sun-down. The orgy of a festival is an orgy of vitality bursting loose on rare holidays from the year's slavery. Their sex-virility is stupendous. Their anger, slumbering under an habitual kindliness, flames like an explosive. They love war. Shake out the old flag, let the bugle peal, and they will leap to the ranks.

And it is not mere animal vitality. No country now is wholly medieval. The Serbs have myriads of schools. The Bulgars and Greeks reduce the illiteracy of their people. Spain has to move and drag its priests with it. Italy is being modernized even in the south. And the people are apt pupils.

I would rather consider them here as nearly all of them were half a century ago, as most of them still are: citizens of the Middle Ages lingering in the nineteenth century.

Here it is enough to remind the reader of two facts. The first is that the happiness of these ignorant peasants, these survivors of the Middle Ages, is but a momentary burst of laughter in a long and mirthless day. They are happy—happy in this robust way—on a few days in the year. It is so long before the next festival comes. Let us crowd what we can into the day. Twelve hours for the heart to rejoice in, and then . . . You see them next day emerge from the stinking cottages in the gray dawn, the girl of twelve spinning with the distaff as she goes to guard the cows all day, the young mother, perhaps yoked with the ass to a plow such as Mayas used in Yucatan two thousand years ago.

But there is a second and more precise test. Let us take, as I proposed, the Europe of the middle of the nineteenth century, when, the chief cities apart, the Middle Ages still lingered in the south and the modern spirit ruled in central and northern parts. And, remember, it is in the south that nature makes her most generous contributions to human happiness. There the roses bloom and grow all the year, and the skies have a glorious azure, and the sun rarely hides.

Well, look back on this contrast of modern and medieval in the Europe of the last century. South of parallel 45, the rough dividing line of the modern and the medieval, you have enormously more disease, suffering, crime, bloodshed, poverty, utter

ignorance of the art of living, and insecurity of life and health than north of it. The statistics of mortality, especially infant mortality, in the south are ghastly. Mothers bear their eight or ten children, meanwhile performing the work of three servants, and bury four or five. Disease is like a legion of devils that God cannot, or will not, check. The knife flies from its sheath daily, and the widow and children mourn. Happy, are they?

That is the Middle Ages: a stretch of a thousand years during which crime, vice, violence, drunkenness, disease, mortality, brutality, exploitation, and injustice were immeasurably worse than in the preceding or in our own time. Hourly we repeat the division of time into two parts, B. C. and A. D., and millions still think that B. C. means Benighted Chaos and A. D. means Age of Delight. In history we divide time into three parts, Ancient Times, the Middle Ages, and Modern Times; and we consider the Middle Ages (as we ought to say) a period of dark and turbulent semi-barbarism lying between two phases of civilization, ancient paganism and modern paganism.

What redeeming features will even the apologist find in the Middle Ages? First—and almost last—medieval art: those glorious cathedrals that you go to Europe to see, those illuminated missals, those wonderful tapestries, those exquisite paintings, those feats of color and form. These artistic achievements are very real and important. They make one hesitate to call the *second half* of the Middle Ages barbaric: in the first half they did not yet exist. To understand aright their relation to medieval life in general and Christianity in particular we have to devote a special chapter to them. And we find that they must certainly not be put to the credit of religion.

What is there besides the art? The guilds of craftsmen? These affected only a tiny minority of the workers, were pagan in origin, and were fiercely resisted by the Church until it found them irrepressible. What else is there? Nothing. The rest is misery, suffering, exploitation by priest and noble, appalling superstition, utter lawlessness, dense ignorance.

Moreover, let us be quite clear what we mean by the Middle Ages. Roughly we mean from about 500 A. D. when paganism and the Roman Empire were extinct, to about 1500 or 1600 A. D. The first half of this period, say from about 500 to 1100, we call the Dark Ages.

We have, however, first to decide very conscientiously whether the Church was responsible for the Dark Ages, and the question at once arises if the degradation of Europe was not due to a force, the downpour of northern barbarians, the action of which it took the Church several centuries to correct.

Now it is quite true that these Goths, Vandals, and other Teutonic tribes destroyed the Roman civilization. It may seem to

the inexpert an extraordinary thing that barbarians from the forests of Germany could thus overrun the mightiest empire of antiquity, but it is not surprising. For centuries these tribes had been multiplying and pressing against the northern barriers. Rome was now too weak to hold the barriers. The Huns from Asia had fallen upon the Germans and driven them furiously south. Then the news spread over the north of the sunny lands and glorious loot of the south, and fresh tribes came down. One must not imagine the onset of the Teutons as an event of the year, or even of a few decades. There were centuries of migration.

In the fifth century they completely wrecked the fabric of the Roman Empire. It is one of the greater ironies of life that this coincided with the general enforcement of Christianity. The naïve young person, of any age, preacher or listener, who dreams of Europe rising in the moral scale when it "embraced Christianity," knows as much about history as the New Zealand young lady I once heard explaining Relativity to her husband and saying that "Euclid had based his system on Newton." The general acceptance (under pressure) of Christianity was inevitably followed by moral chaos, because it coincided with the downfall of civilization.

Then you find no fault with Christianity, the apologist will say, completely reversing his position, because it was not the *cause* of the degradation of Europe, the rise of serfdom, the destruction of the schools, the subjection of woman, etc.

Broad views are often good, and often dangerous. You must at least know the details. The first detail is that these "barbarians" were not so barbaric as some imagine. At the beginning of the second century, when the Romans were sober under the excellent Stoic emperors, the great historian Tacitus wrote a work on "The Morals of the Germans": meaning the Teutonic tribes of the north generally. The purpose of that book was to shame the Romans by holding up to them the superior idealism of the Teutons! It is, of course, exaggerated; but there is truth in it. The northerners had law and some fine ideals.

The second detail is that they were Christians. The chief Germanic tribes which poured over Italy, Gaul, and Spain in the fifth century had already accepted Christianity; and few Christians have such superstitious awe of the power of priests and bishops as converted barbarians.

And the third and most important detail is that these "barbarians" gave proof after proof that they were ready to accept civilization. Numbers of them had risen to the highest positions in the Roman army and state even before the fifth century. Tradition has given the Vandals, who overran Spain and Africa, so terrible a reputation that we use their name still for destroyers or semi-barbarians. In most respects they were as bad as their reputation, but the leading authority on the Teutonic peoples, Dr.

Hodgkin ("Italy and Her Invaders," an eight-volume work which the reader should consult for details), calls them "an army of Puritans." In fact, the fifth-century priest Salvianus represents both Goths and Vandals as stern Puritans shocked by the immorality of the Christians of the empire. He tells us that when the Vandals took Christian Carthage, they set about a purification of morals which disturbed the inhabitants far more than the loss of political freedom did. . . . And within two centuries of their adoption of Christianity these Germanic peoples, whose pagan ideals had kept them chaste for ages, were more flagrantly immoral than the Romans had been.

Lastly, the Teutons, the new masters of Europe and pupils of the Church, in several places inaugurated a new civilization by blending their old law and ideals with the Roman; and in every single case they had no assistance from the Church, but were hampered and ultimately thwarted by the clergy.

No, the barbarians are not responsible for the Dark Ages. They brought with them an appreciation of law and some high ideals. They required only direction. A strong king such as Theodoric or Charlemagne (both deaf to the clergy) could civilize them in a few years. The Church, which controlled them all, gave them no lead whatever in the direction of civilization. It was not a civilizing force. It was a fairy tale about another world blended with money-loving priestcraft. The Church is deeply and terribly responsible for the Dark Ages, for the suspension of the evolution of civilization for a thousand years. Today there would be—as will be the condition in a few centuries—no war, little or no poverty, no ignorance, no crime, and infinitely more happiness, if the Christian Church had been a civilizing force.

THE MORALS OF THE NEW EUROPE

By the end of the fourth century Christianity was established. The world was now Christian, and I would advise any serious inquirer to find for himself what happened. If he cannot read the original Latin authorities, he has two learned works, which cover the period: the Protestant historian Dean Milman's "History of Latin Christianity," and the "History of European Morals" of Mr. Lecky: a Rationalist, but a man who says all that can justly be said, and much more, in favor of Christianity.

These two historians agree entirely that Europe passed into a state of moral chaos. The Dean is at first disturbed when he approaches the period, and he piously reflects that "the evil was too profoundly seated in the habits of the Roman world to submit to the control of religion." But Milman was too candid a scholar to maintain that insincere position. The evil was new, not inherited from the pagans, and it grew worse and worse as the world moved farther away from paganism.

For the fifth century our one authority is the priest Salvianus. In a Latin work "On the Providence of God" he very frankly describes the morals of the Christian world in which he lives, and he explicitly says that there has been a very considerable deterioration of morals since pagan days. He writes, for instance (iii, 9): "Besides a very few who avoid evil, what is almost the whole body of Christians but a sink of iniquity? How many in the Church will you find that are not drunkards or adulterers or fornicators or gamblers or robbers or murderers—or all together?" Rhetorical exaggeration, you will say: we know what these censors of morals are. But if Seneca or some other Stoic had written about the pagans of his time, you would ask me to take it literally. In any case, please understand the situation. You tell me that the morals of Europe improved after the triumph of Christianity, and the *only* authority, a Christian authority, that you can quote as to the general morals of Europe in the fifth century *says precisely the opposite*. The letters of the contemporary Pope Leo I support Salvianus.

Well, you may say, at least Christianity abolished the brutal games of the amphitheater. Does not Lecky say: "There is scarcely any other single reform important in the moral history of mankind as the suppression of the gladiatorial shows, and this feat must be almost exclusively ascribed to the Christian Church"? It is another lamentable instance of Lecky's habit of presenting bouquets that are not merited. It is quite absurd to magnify the suppression of the games into one of the greatest of moral reforms, and it is wholly misleading to say that "the Christian Church" suppressed them.

From about the year 380 the Church ruled the consciences of the Roman emperors, and got mighty privileges and wealth for itself: but it never suggested to them to suppress the games. No Christian emperor had the courage or even the inclination to frown on the games as Marcus Aurelius had done. The new generation of Christian Romans had exactly the same passion for these brutal shows as the pagan Romans had had. The Emperor Constantine had given an obscure decree against the games in one province of his empire, and it was never enforced even there. The fanatically Christian Emperor Theodosius, docile to every whisper from the bishops, compelled his prisoners to fight as gladiators.

In the year 404, long after the complete triumph of Christianity, the gladiatorial games were proceeding as usual in the Roman amphitheater when the monk Telemachus flung himself into the arena to protest. All honor to the monk—he was stoned to death by the *Christian* spectators—but he is not "the Christian Church." Until then the Church had made no protest, nor do we find any ecclesiastical assembly or prominent ecclesiastic condemning the games, until the end of the seventh century. The combats of man

against man were abandoned—of Church pressure there is no trace—but fights with beasts long continued; and Lecky quaintly confesses that "the difficulty of procuring wild animals" had much to do with the abandonment of these. But as the Church of the Middle Ages blessed and smiled upon the almost equally deadly combats of knights, and allowed the duel to survive to modern times, its apologists would do well to talk less about the gladiatorial games.

THE IRON AGE

Europe sank steadily into the deepest and foulest bog of the Dark Ages, the tenth century, which historians call the Iron Age: largely, one imagines, on account of the appallingly free use of the knife and the sword.

For the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries we have a very scanty literature. Gregory of Tours, who throws such lurid light on the fifth and sixth centuries, died in 594. For the next half century we have only a very thin and meager monkish chronicle, which tells the same dark story, and then there is not a scrap of reliable history for a hundred years. Europe was sunk in the crassest ignorance and superstition. Our only indications of the moral condition are Papal documents (written in such barbarous Latin that one can scarcely read them), acts of councils, letters of bishops, and scraps of monastic chronicles. These all tell a consistent story. Take the letters to Rome from Germany of St. Boniface. He writes to the Pope (ep. xlix): "Today for the most part in our episcopal cities the seats are assigned to greedy laymen or adulterous clerics or wenchers, to enjoy the material benefits of them." All the contemporary information we have tells the same story of gluttonous, drunken, and corrupt clergy and monks, of murders and mutilations, of a densely ignorant and coarse population.

And just here the reader will find a useful illustration of the two ways of writing history, the Catholic and the historical. The seventh century, the most ignorant and one of the grossest of all, has supplied more than eight hundred saints to the Roman calendar! Writing the life of one of these, Cardinal Pitra says:

> The finest title of the seventh century to vindication is the great number of saints it produced—no other century was so glorified except the age of the martyrs, the number of whom is known to God alone. Each year has its harvest, each day its group. . . . If, then, it pleases God and Christ to scatter these splendors of the saints so bountifully upon a century, what does it matter that history and human glory think so little of it?

That is, of course, all that the Catholic reads about the early Middle Ages. On these eight hundred "self-tormentors" of a century which is too gross to write its own history he bases his claim that Christianity purified the world.

But if we have no work adequately reflecting the life of the clergy and the people in this seventh century, we have ample evidence (in Gregory of Tours and the letters of Gregory the Great) that it opened with as dark, violent, and vicious a population as had ever existed in Europe: we have the chronicle of Fredigarius extending that picture as far as 642: and, when the literary blank ends in the eighth century, we find Christendom in exactly the same condition of universal vice and violence. It is grimly significant that the chair of Peter itself was filled by no less than twenty-one Popes in succession in the one hundred years after the death of Gregory.

In the year 896 there was witnessed in Rome a scene which fitly inaugurated one hundred and fifty years of such degradation as has never fallen upon any other religious organization in history. Stephen VI became Pope, after a bloody contest of the various factions. He ordered the body of one of his predecessors, Formosus, who had been several weeks buried, to be brought to the Papal palace. The stinking corpse was clothed in the pontifical garments and propped in the throne. The august representative of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the channel of God's mercy to the human race, gathered his "cardinals" (the name was already in use) and bishops round the ghastly object, and they vented upon it a fury such as one would hardly expect savages to show to a corpse. In the end they cut three fingers from the right hand of the putrid body, and flung it into the Tiber.

If paganism, if any pagan civilization, can show the remotest parallel to that trial of the corpse of Pope Formosus, it has, apparently, not yet been discovered by any Catholic apologist. Here, moreover, we have the highest and most official representatives of what was understood to be the highest thing in Christendom, quite openly and officially perpetrating this orgy of barbarism. If that was Rome and the Papacy at the end of the ninth century, what was likely to be the condition of Europe in general?

And it was only the beginning. In the very next year Pope Stephen quarreled with his own supporters. They thrust him into a dungeon and strangled him. Six Popes succeeded each other in the next eight years, and, while history has no record of the end of most of them, we can surmise it. In 904 the most turbulent of all the fighting bishops cut his way, literally, to the chair of Peter, and the "Church of God," as the Catholic calls it, became for thirty years a Pornocracy, or "government by whores." My Catholic reader will shrink from the word, but it is from the most respected and most learned of Catholic historians that I borrow it.

Cardinal Baronius, who uses it placidly, notes in his "Annals," of the year 912, that Pope Sergius III, who had been the moving spirit in the trial of the body of Formosus and had murdered two Popes at least to get the "holy see" for himself, was the lover of

"that most powerful, most noble, and most shameless whore, Theodora." Father Pagi, Mansi, the Benedictine editors of the Pope's letters, and even recent Catholic writers like Mgr. Duchesne and Canon W. Barry ("The Papal Monarchy") admit that the evidence is irresistible; and I have shown in my "Crises in the History of the Papacy" that the difficulties raised by one or two more recent Catholic writers are frivolous.

Theodora, wife of one of the highest nobles of Rome, was of such loose morals that the chief writers of her time call her "a whore," and two Popes, Sergius III and John X, were amongst her lovers. Her equally beautiful and equally unscrupulous daughter Marozia also is called "a whore," and Pope Sergius III was so notoriously the lover of the daughter as well as of the mother that the "Pontifical Book" itself, the official Papal chronicle, describes Pope John XI as "son of Sergius III" (by Marozia). These "whores" governed the Papacy and Rome for thirty years. Our chief source of information about them is the contemporary Bishop Liutprand, whose outspoken statements are sufficiently supported by two monkish chroniclers and the official Papal calendar.

Rome was more generally corrupt than it had been in the days of the insane Nero or the feeble-minded Elagabal; and this corruption was intimately connected with the general illiteracy. It is on record that at this time some of these members of the highest Roman nobility could not write their own names; how many *could* we do not know. It is useless to ask us to consider these vices as relics of paganism, when we know that from being a generally literate city, and in its higher class a very refined and cultivated city, Rome under the Popes had sunk to an illiteracy that has no parallel elsewhere in the history of civilization.

The history of European morals has still to be written. Lecky's work is not a systematic chronological exposition, and it ends with the appearance of Charlemagne. But in this and other books I give sufficient evidence for the reader to form an opinion; and I show that all the great historians agree in that opinion. Pagan Greece and Rome had been comparable with ourselves in character and conduct. With the triumph of Christianity and the fall of Rome, Europe sank steadily age by age until it reached the unprecedented degradation of the Iron Age.

THE BLIGHT OF LIFE

By the twelfth century Europe was slightly reducing its ignorance. "The Church had given it schools," the apologist says; which really means that the few schools which a few bishops (not the Church) gave it had been expanded by the rising tide of the secular life of the time. Civic and economic development was beginning to re-civilize Europe. Exactly, says my friend the apologist. At last the Church had mastered the chaos which the barbarians

had caused, and law, order, education, art, civic life, guilds . . . . oh, everything good was springing up under its beneficent influence.

But let us look at the facts. What was the Church actually doing at this time to enlighten the people? At Laon the chief treasures shown to the public were some milk and hair of the Virgin Mary. There was a crystal lid to the golden case and you could —for a consideration—see the precious whitish fluid and the hair with your own eyes. This was Laon's set-off to the rival attraction at Soissons, a neighboring town, which had secured one of the milk-teeth shed by the infant Jesus.

There seems to have been enough milk of the Virgin—some of it was still exhibited in Spanish churches in the nineteenth century—preserved in Europe to feed a few calves. There was hair enough to make a mattress. There were sufficient pieces of "the true cross" to make a boat. There were teeth of Christ enough to outfit a dentist (one monastery, at Charroux, had the complete set.) There were so many sets of baby-linen of the infant Jesus, in Italy, France and Spain, that one could have opened a shop with them. One of the greatest churches in Rome had Christ's manger-cradle. Seven churches had his authentic umbilical cord, and a number of churches had his foreskin (removed at circumcision and kept as a souvenir by Mary). One church had the miraculous imprint of his little bottom on a stone on which he had sat. Mary herself had left enough wedding rings, shoes, stockings, shirts, girdles, etc., to fill a museum. You can, if you are good, see one of her shifts still in Chartres cathedral; though in this coarser age of ours it is called a "veil." One church had Aaron's rod. Six churches had the six heads cut off John the Baptist . . . . Every one of these things was, remember, in its origin, a cynical, blasphemous swindle; and Rome was the great trading center. All the wriggling of all the G. K. Chestertons and all the Jesuits and Paulists in America will not obscure that. Each of those objects was at first launched upon the world with deliberate mendacity. Honor and honesty were as rare as chastity in Christianized Europe and as rare in the Church as in the "world." To talk of those ages as "spiritual" and ours as "materialistic" . . . . One is almost disposed to ask for an application to the clergy of the law about obtaining money under false pretenses.

The overwhelming majority of the population of Christendom were serfs. One must bear in mind always that there was in those ages nothing remotely like the industrial population of modern times. Craftsmen were few. Home-labor supplied most of a family's wants, and they were very modest. There are no statistics, of course, but I would hazard the statement that about ninety percent of the people of Christendom were serfs.

It is by these that we must judge the Middle Ages; not by the nobles (unscrupulous exploiters, most of them), or velvet-clad

burghers and merchants, or even the guildsmen. And their life was horrible. The most optimistic of expert works on them is Rogers' "Six Centuries of Work and Wages," but I have shown from his own learned pages that the life of the enormous mass of the people was filthy, miserable, and vile. He rightly speaks of "the inconceivably filthy habits of the people" and their "very few holidays." They worked, from dawn to sunset, on three hundred and eight days a year. Their meat was salt—and the salt was poisonous—during half the year. Their hovels were bare, dismal, disease-breeding kennels. Their daughters, or plump young wives, were free to any abbot or lord or servant of such. They were tied to the soil, in monotonous small villages, and had to risk their lives at any moment in the lord's quarrels or the king's wars.

There were not three million people in England during the beautiful thirteenth century, and it took four centuries for this population to double. With modern conditions of health a population, not restrained by birth control, would double in much less than fifty years. The carnage in the ages of faith was appalling, and the suffering of those who survived was beyond our comprehension. One epidemic, the Black Death, killed twenty-five million in two years. Such epidemics swept mercilessly from one end to the other of helpless Europe. Naturally, at the end of such a pestilence of famine, labor was scarce and was better paid—those are the periods which the optimist quotes—which meant more money for the church, the lords, the brigands, and the quacks and impostors and exploiters generally.

That was the wonderful thirteenth century, the flower of the Middle Ages. Try to picture to yourself the life of nine people out of ten in Christendom at that time. Cut out those pictures of occasional saints or scholars, or silk-robed merchants and gay tournaments. Follow the life of the man working from dawn to sunset, then returning to a sty, the floor unpaved, the cesspool and mud-heap at the door, the filthy interior without the cheapest comfort or adornment. Imagine the woman bearing her seven or eight children in it, doing twice the work of the poorest modern woman, brutally treated by most husbands; a cow . . . . And the same gossipy and crassly superstitious little village round her from cradle to grave, the scold's bridle or the ducking-stool if she dare assert herself, the suspicion of witchcraft if she wondered if the gentle Jesus did really arrange all this, the sudden departure of the man for war, the famine drawing on with fiendish slowness, the plague spreading over the countryside. And there you have a true picture of the thirteenth century.

CHAPTER XXII

New Light on Witchcraft

The Witch of Tradition—The Real Witch—The Catholic Massacres—The Secret Cult—The Protestant Massacres

The Witch of Tradition

FOURTEEN years ago a very distinguished literary colleague of George Bernard Shaw said to me: "Shaw is in senile decay." Ten years later I went to see Shaw's "Joan"; and I concluded that if the dramatic feeling, the mastery of stagecraft, the agility and sureness of insight into human nature, of that remarkable play were symptoms of advanced senility I would reconsider my design to avoid that normal period of existence.

And the play just as plainly indicates the strength or stubbornness of its author in its chief defect; it is an historical play and it is entirely unhistorical. Many years ago Shaw decided that historians do not know how to write history, and he would teach them. Unfortunately, in order to grasp the truth of a single personality of an earlier and different age one has laboriously to learn a mass of detail about that age, and labor of that kind does not fascinate men of febrile imagination. Shaw cannot write history.

Was Joan of Arc a witch? Shaw may have heard that there are a few quite scholarly people who think it possible that she was. Scholarly people, he would say, can believe anything. He robustly excludes the very possibility. The charge of witchcraft against "the Maid" was a mere pretext of priests and politicians; and Shaw, in his scorn of science and Rationalism, so surprisingly exonerates the priests and the Inquisition in his play that a Catholic weekly actually announced that he was about to enter the Church.

The murder of Joan was plotted by soldiers and statesmen—English soldiers and statesmen, of course—and the poor priests were bullied and cajoled into a tragi-comic trial for witchcraft.

It was quite plain that Mr. Shaw does not know that our idea of witchcraft has been radically altered. He does not even know that one of the characters he introduced into his play, Gilles de Rais, the original "Bluebeard," was, not the indolent court-fop and trifler he makes him, but a very stern and earnest young man, Joan's most intimate friend, and a witch. Probably Shaw does not know that there were male witches as well as female, and that the

child in her mother's arms, the maid of fifteen, or the winsome young mother of twenty-two, might be a witch just as easily as the old wrinkled dame who lived in a cottage on the edge of the wood and gathered her herbs by the light of the moon.

It is this new conception of witchcraft, which we will explain in this chapter, and will apply to the trial of Joan of Arc, that brings the subject within the program of religious controversy which I am realizing. This horrid massacre of women age by age was tragic enough even on the old conception of witches. Any old dame, widow or spinster, who was wise enough to wish to avoid the cackle of her empty-headed neighbors was apt to be suspected of witchcraft. The child who fell ill—inoculated by the open drain or cess-pool by the door—had passed her in the street, and so had clearly been bewitched. The mother who had a miscarriage, the farmer whose pigs sickened. . . . The witch! Drown her out of hand, or, less humanely, let the priest see to it; and then the horrors of trial and torture will be added to the injury of death.

This thing occurring during many centuries all over Christendom concerns us just as much as does the beauty of a cathedral. I am not indicting the Church; not merely gathering all the dishonoring facts which can be picked here and there out of the history of medieval Europe. We are seriously studying the effect upon civilization of the acceptance and world-establishment of Christianity. It created a new frame of mind, a new outlook on life, a new character; and this new spirit expressed itself in, amongst other things, the torture and burning or drowning of some hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of men and women on the ground that they were witches. And the crime was directly inspired by the new religion. The sole inspirations of the murderous attitude were belief in the devil and the express statement of the Bible that witches were in league with evil spirits and must be put to death. In the fully developed law of the Church witchcraft was heresy. It was a religious crime.

This was dreadful enough even if we suppose, as is commonly supposed, that the murdered women were yellow, soured, misanthropic old dames from whom death was in any case not far distant. No doubt a poor, brooding, solitary old woman would be more likely than any other in the village to incur popular suspicion. Harenet, one of the earliest English denouncers of the belief in witchcraft (though no modern book ever mentions him), before the end of the seventeenth century thus ironically reminded the witch-hunters of one common type of their prey:

> An old woman with a wrinkled face, a furrowed brow, a hairy lip, a gobber tooth, a squint eye, a squeaking voice, or a scolding tongue, having a ragged coat on her back, a spindle in her hand, and a dog by her side—a wretched, infirm and impotent creature, pelted

> and persecuted by all the neighbors because the farmer's cart had stuck in the gateway, or some idle boy had pretended to spit needles and pins for the sake of a holiday from school or work.

Life was hell to these old dames for near a thousand years after the establishment of the religion which is said to have uplifted woman.

Yet Catholic literary men and priests and Protestant preachers, who are rarely serious students of history, find this old-hag theory of witchcraft convenient. Sorry for the old ladies, of course, but . . . You can understand it, can't you? The edge of your resentment is dulled. The glib word-spinners remind you of the vivid faith of those heroic days—the greater sensitiveness to the devil's work in the world—the living fear of God, and so on. In other works I tell enough about the real Middle Ages to spoil this pretty argument.

But a worse error of these apologists, the popular fallacy which is still all but universal in Christendom, is to suppose that the witches were even for the greater part old women. Thousands of reports of witch-trials have now been studied, and from the hundreds that I have myself read at least in summary, I should say that feeble old dames were a comparatively small minority. Maids in their teens, like Joan of Arc, are appallingly common amongst the victims. Young women in their twenties and thirties, strong and defiant of the priests, seem to be almost in the majority. Men are frequent amongst them; and the men include numbers of priests, nobles, lawyers, etc. Let me quote the translation of a letter written at Würzburg during the persecution there in 1629:

> There are still four hundred in the city, high and low, of every rank and sex—nay, even clerics—so strongly accused that they may be arrested any hour. Some out of all offices and faculties must be executed; clerics, counselors, doctors, city officials and court assessors. There are law students to be arrested. The prince-bishop has over forty students here who are to be pastors; thirteen or fourteen of these are said to be witches. A few days ago a dean was arrested; two others who were summoned have fled. The notary of our church consistory, a very learned man, was yesterday arrested and put to torture. In a word, a third part of the city is involved. A week ago a maiden of nineteen was put to death, of whom it is everywhere said that she was the fairest in the whole city and was held by everybody a girl of singular modesty and purity. She will be followed by seven or eight others of the fairest. There are three hundred children of three or four years of age who are said to have had intercourse with the devil. I have seen put to death children of ten, promising students of ten, twelve, fourteen, fifteen, etc.

This is not a page from some history of witchcraft in which the writer is rhetorically embroidering a statement of a contemporary chronicle. It is part of a letter written at the time, the year 1629, in the city of Würzburg itself, and by no less a person than the

bishop's chancellor. No more veracious document could be imagined. And it is just by chance that in a single city out of hundreds we get this contemporary and authoritative account of the terror that for a time blanched the faces of the citizens.

This single passage must, although it belongs to an exceptionally ferocious period of witch-hunting, convince any reader at once that the popular idea of witchcraft is entirely false. I say "popular," but it is singular how slow even scholars, historians and scientists, have been to grasp the remarkable significance of the witch-movement. In the latest edition of the "Encyclopedia Britannica," which is certainly the finest work of general reference to which the public can turn for information, the article on "Witchcraft" is totally inadequate. The author is a competent ethnographer, yet he writes almost entirely from the traditional point of view. Only in the last few lines he mentions the very suggestive fact, without perceiving its significance, that in Italy today witchcraft is still called *la vecchia religione*—"the old religion"—and that in its historical phenomena we must recognize a stratum of popular beliefs which are "derived in the main from pagan sources."

The "New International Encyclopedia" is no better, and the generally very able and informing "Dictionary of Religion and Ethics" entirely omits the subject. Yet one point which is quite fatal to the popular conception has been established in every history of witchcraft. This is that witches were not merely, or even usually, old women whose repulsive forms or isolated lives drew popular suspicion upon them. The fairest maids of a town were just as liable to be dragged before the Roman Inquisition or the Protestant bishop as was the old dame who lived alone on the outskirts of the village. Hundreds, if not thousands, of maids like Joan of Arc were drowned or burned at the stake as witches. Women of all ages, from the babe upward, were arraigned. Women of every rank figure in the lists of victims. Men also of every rank and degree of education or illiteracy enter the chronicle. Theologians, lawyers, nobles, and leaders of armies are found as well as peasants and artisans.

And it will further transpire that even the young women met the sentence of death in the same spirit as the girl-martyrs—the very few *genuine* girl-martyrs—of the early Church. They spat at the religion of their Christian persecutors. They had, they said, a higher religion, and would die rather than abjure it. The Church, it is true, in most cases left them no opinion. By a refinement of brutality it enjoined that they should be fiendishly tortured to extract confessions; then, in order to have a formal assurance of their guilt, it held that confessions thus wrung from them in the agony of torture were "voluntary confessions"; and finally it said that, since conversions professed out of fear of tor-

ture were unreliable, the witches might and ought to be put to death. Most of them, therefore, suffered death in silence. But in numberless cases they defied their tormentors and murderers, and boasted that they died for a greater faith than the belief in Jesus.

Hence there is an increasing tendency to regard witchcraft as an organized religion. The best history of witchcraft is Dr. W. G. Soldan's "Geschichte der Hexenprozesse," as edited by Max Bauer in 1911: a fine two-volume work superbly illustrated, which has unfortunately not been translated. In the final chapter the authors discuss all the views of witchcraft during the last hundred years, and they fail to realize its full significance. They are disposed to regard too many details as mere concessions under torture to the queries of the judges or as hysterical illusions.

Much sounder, though it is little more than an account of trials in England, is Miss M. A. Murray's "The Witch-Cult in Western Europe" (1921). Miss Murray, of London University, has written a model work within her limits: candid and scholarly. The reader will find it a revelation and, in spite of the tragedy, a most entertaining work. Her conclusion is (p. 12):

> The evidence proves that underlying the Christian religion was a cult practised by many classes of the community, chiefly however by the more ignorant or those in the less thickly inhabited parts of the country. It can be traced back to pre-Christian times and appears to be the ancient religion of western Europe. The god, anthropomorphic or theriomorphic, was worshiped in well-defined rites; the organization was highly developed; and the ritual is analogous to many other ancient rituals. The dates of the chief festivals suggest that the religion belonged to a race which had not reached the agricultural stage. . . . It was a definite religion with beliefs, ritual, and organization as highly developed as that of any other cult in the world.

In saying that it was chiefly the religion of the more ignorant, Miss Murray seems to have forgotten that at least ninety-five percent of the people of Europe were then illiterate, and she, perhaps gives a wrong impression as to the survival of the religion from pre-Christian times.

While psychologists have been busy applying their formulae to the mind of the witch—and have generally come to wrong conclusions—historians have been collecting the scattered evidence, analyzing the reports of trials, and constructing an entirely new idea of the witch-movement. It was the strongest and most widespread in the most enlightened, or least illiterate, centuries of the Middle Ages. The solution is that the medieval Church was right in its idea. Witchcraft was organized heresy, a formidable revolt against Christianity.

THE REAL WITCH

A complete account of the ingredients of the witch-idea or even of the genuine witch-cult would fill a volume like this. We

should have to go back to the very dawn of religion or, if the theory of Sir J. G. Frazer is correct, before its dawn. Frazer holds that magic preceded religion. I contend that magic and the belief in spirits developed separately. But they are blended in the early idea of the witch: a man or woman who receives magical powers by a league with evil spirits.

Something corresponding to the witch is found, and is dreaded and abhorred, in every stage of human evolution. The spirits of the dead were very soon regarded as in very large part malignant and malevolent, and certain persons were held to act in conjunction with them and practice "black magic"; to raise destructive storms, to blight crops or cattle, to cause disease, sterility, or death. Sometimes this persisted quite apart from belief in spirits. The Romans were not much more definite than the Babylonians in their beliefs about a future life, yet they believed very emphatically in magic and its evil powers. The magician was exposed to a sentence of death in Roman law and was often executed. The ground of the law was, of course, purely secular. The practicer of black magic was dangerous to the community.

The Babylonians and Assyrians (and Persians) believed that myriads of evil spirits or devils hovered about the face of the earth and caused all the evils of humanity; and that there was a special class of these malignant beings who moved about at night, inspired bad dreams, and even sucked the blood of sleepers. This belief in legions of devils passed through the Jews, into Christianity, and the particular belief in night-prowlers and blood-suckers or entrail-suckers (vampires, harpies, etc.) obtained currency amongst the Greeks and Romans. The Greek and Latin word *strix,* which properly means the screech-owl (so naturally associated with the legend), was applied to these dreaded night-birds.

The Fathers of the Church, particularly St. Augustine, the most influential of them all, denounced magic as "pagan" and as a collusion with the devils. The synods of Elvira (306), Ancyra (314), and Laodicea (375), and the sermons of St. Chrysostom and the other great preachers, show that the new Christians brought with them the magical practices as well as the vices of the pagan world. It does not seem to have been enough to denounce these as pagan, so St. Augustine worked out a more deadly theory: the diviner or magician, in whose powers he firmly believed, was in league with the devil. And the Bible was quite clear about such people. It (Leviticus xx, 27 and Exodus xxii, 18) defined a witch as one who "hath a familiar spirit" and condemned him or her to death. Moreover, the Latin and Catholic Bible translates verse 5 of Psalm xcvi (Psalm xcv in the Catholic Bible): "The gods of the heathen are *devils.*" Paganism and devilism coincided.

The change was lamentable and is responsible for the ghastly tragedy of later years. The Roman persecution of magicians was

based entirely on the belief that they had abnormal powers and the progress of enlightenment might have undermined this belief. But if magic meant collusion with the devil, belief in it was sure to be magnified very considerably under a religion which taught that the world swarmed with devils. It was precisely the elaboration of this devil-doctrine by the great theologians of the Middle Ages which caused the appalling witch-massacres of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. What surprises one at first is that there was comparatively little persecution of witches before the thirteenth century. It was this wonderful thirteenth century, of which modern Catholics are so proud, that inaugurated the massacres on a large scale. A famous philosopher has called it the most stupid century in the whole of the Middle Ages, and certainly it was the most tyrannical, most superstitious, and most sanguinary.

As far as magic is concerned, the Church never wavered, and the practice of its children never relaxed. The situation is analogous to that of the virtue of chastity. The law was clear: the practice almost universally ignored it. On the other hand, there was no consistent attitude in the Church in regard to the *striga* (as the *strix* was now called), the blood-sucking nocturnal creature. The Salic Law in south Germany sentenced the *striga* to death. The Lombard Law treated the idea as a superstition. Under Charlemagne a synod held at Paderborn in 785 enacted (canon 6): "Whosoever, deceived by the devil, believes, as the pagans did, that any person is a witch and can devour men, and therefore burns that person, and gives her flesh to others to eat, shall be put to death." Individual churchmen were just as much at variance. Some believed in the *striga:* others did not.

Characteristically, what the Church was concerned about most was magic of an erotic nature. In 860 the great archbishop of Rheims, Hincmar, held a solemn inquiry into this, as the king's concubine was supposed to have used such magic on the queen, and he concluded that it was genuine deviltry. On the whole, there were few executions of witches until the eleventh century, when we begin to find isolated executions more frequently in the chronicles.

I am, however, more concerned with the other aspects of witchcraft: the suggestion of an organization contained in the belief that witches flew in the air at night in droves or to an appointed gathering place. It is usually said that there was no organization of witches until the thirteenth century, which would be quite inconsistent with the view that witchcraft was the ancient pagan religion of Europe. The historical truth is not so simple, and it is interesting.

At the end of the tenth century Abbot Regino made a large collection of Church laws and canons, and one of these is concerned with witches. Where and when this canon was passed we do not

know. Some scholars trace it to the Synod of Ancyra, in 314, which is impossible, for the Roman world was then almost entirely pagan. It seems to come from some synod of the sixth century. It says:

> And we must not overlook this, that certain wicked women, who have turned aside to Satan, seduced by the illusions and phantasms of the demons, believe and profess that during the night they ride with Diana the goddess of the pagans [another version says, or with Herodias] and an innumerable crowd of women on certain beasts, and pass over great spaces of the earth during the night, obeying her commands as their mistress, and on certain nights are summoned to her service. Would that these had perished in their perfidy and had not dragged many with them to destruction! For an innumerable multitude, deceived by this false opinion, believe that these things are true and so depart from the faith and fall into the error of the pagans, believing that there is some divinity apart from the one God. (Migne edition.)

The abbot goes on to say that all this is the work of the devil, who assumes various forms to tempt silly women. The law is reproduced again a few years later in the collection of Bishop Burkhard of Worms (Decreta, bk. ix, chap. 5), who adds the vampire-idea: that women claim that they can, even while they lie in bed with their husbands, fly out in the air and suck the heart and entrails out of other men who are abed.

A life of Pope Damasus (of the fourth century) pretends that as early as 367 a Roman synod took cognizance of these women who rode on beasts at night with Herodias. This life is probably spurious, but it is clear that by the sixth century (to which the canon seems to belong) there was something very like organized witchcraft in Europe. We will not press the words "innumerable multitude," but clearly numbers of women met by night to honor Diana, the goddess of the moon and of fertility.

This does not surprise us. Europe never voluntarily accepted Christianity. Paganism was driven into dark corners, but age by age the Church had to thunder against it. The women in particular clung to their Diana, if not to the still older mother-earth goddess. Sterility was a curse in those days, however convenient it may seem to moderns. Everything that could counteract it and heat the blood-magic, the aid of a goddess, or even the mutual inspiration of a human orgy—was treasured. The cold advice of Christianity to pray to Mary, was found less effective in practice and less congenial than the nocturnal adventure. But it had to be conducted with secrecy and cunning, and it seemed as if the women must fly through the air to the point of assembly.

Where I venture to differ from Miss Murray is when she supposes that these more or less organized gatherings persisted and reappeared as the witches of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Dianists disappear, and for centuries the Church deals only

with individual magicians, male or female. But a new element was meantime entering European life, and the reader will find that it throws a fascinating light upon witchcraft. It is usual to say that Thomas Aquinas with his absurd demonology, and the Inquisition with its terrible scent for heresy, created witchcraft. Let us try another line.

The true religious history of Europe has never yet been written. Possibly the full truth will never be known, as there has been so much suppression and distortion of facts; but we do know that the accepted version is false. Christianity was imposed by force upon a reluctant world. The current idea of a "conversion" of the Roman world to it is not more false than the almost universal belief that it was meekly accepted, if not profoundly cherished, until modern times. Although our forefathers were robbed of their schools and detained for ages in the densest ignorance, it is to their credit that age after age they, in immense multitudes, rebelled against the corrupt priestcraft and the absurd legend of the Christian religion. It is only by the bloody use of force on a colossal scale that the Church maintained its dominion for so many centuries.

Witchcraft was one expression of the constant effort of the race to rid itself of the religion imposed on it. One of the chief rival religions to Christianity in the fourth century had been Manichaeism, and the writings of St. Augustine, who was at first a Manichaean, but later one of the worst slanderers of the religion, show us how heroically its adherents fought for their creed even long after imperial decrees had declared, under pain of confiscation and death, that Christianity was to be the sole religion of the empire.

I need say of it here only that it was an ascetic religion, and that it was based essentially on the ancient Persian belief in two supreme principles, one of light and goodness, the other of darkness and evil. Manichaeism was crushed by the aid of the imperial troops but Manichaean ideas were destined still to play a great part in Europe. And one aspect of the religion deserves special notice. It has been, I suppose, the custom of religious bodies from time immemorial to slander and vilify rival bodies. The Romans themselves put the darkest interpretations on the secret gatherings of the Christians; they were said to indulge in sensual orgies, to worship a god with an ass's head and to kill babies for sacramental purposes. So in time the Christians vilified the Manichees; though St. Jerome candidly admits that they were men and women of far stricter virtue than the Christians themselves. Augustine, however, was chiefly instrumental in defaming them.

In writing his life, I discovered a carefully overlooked passage in which, posing as the first Inquisitor, he made a public examination of two Manichees. The first was a girl of twelve, and from the lips of this child the pious elderly bishop drew the confession, by

leading questions, that the Manichees made their sacrament of human semen and flour. The second victim was a sacred virgin of the sect, and Augustine at once charged her with what he had put into the mouth of the little girl. To make the sacrament, he said, she had lain nude on the ground, a little heap of flour beside her, and the priests had . . . . She protested that she was a virgin, but Augustine's midwives examined her and declared that she was not. Then, Augustine says, she confessed the whole "abominable crime"; in other words, she escaped the drastic punishment of her heresy by letting the bishop have his way and feigning conversion. Later we hear of similar examinations on Manichaean women and confessions of intercourse with "the devil" (probably meaning his representative, the Manichaean priest).

Here, I am convinced, is the origin of one of the ingredients of the early myth of the witch; though in the fully developed witch-cult there was unquestionably a large amount of "intercourse with the devil." However that may be, the Manichaean ideas were merely thrust out of sight, and they broke out again from time to time. One of the most famous heretics of the Greek Church, Paul of Samosata, was the son of a Manichaean mother and his heresy combined the Manichaean principle of two supreme powers with an early form of Protestantism or evangelical Christianity. The Greek Church and Empire—which, let us remember, had never been tainted by barbarian invasions—were now, in the eighth century, appallingly corrupt, and this purer religion, as it was, spread widely, especially among the Armenians. Emperor after emperor tried to suppress it. The Empress Theodora put to death no less than one hundred thousand members of the sect; or, in a few years, made fifty times as many martyrs as the pagans had in three centuries. Finally, in the tenth century, no less than two hundred thousand members of the sect were transplanted from Armenia to Thrace, to form a living bulwark against the encroachments of the Bulgars.

But within a short time the worthy Paulicians had spread their gospel peacefully among the Bulgars, and Europe was confronted with a new heresy, the Bogomiles. You have probably never heard of the Bogomiles, but you will surely have heard of those famous heretics of the south of France, the Albigensians, who were drowned by the greatest of the Popes, Innocent III, in their own blood. They (and the Waldensians, the Cathari, the Patarenes, and other obscure bodies of the time) were inspired by the Bogomiles and had the same tincture of Manichaean ideas. The orthodox Catholics of France called them *bougres* (Bulgars) and it was thus that the innocent name of a people became the worst swear-word of French and English tongues. They were reproached with having a pope in Bulgaria. In short, from the tenth century onward

this revolt against orthodox Christianity and its corrupt priests and monks spread over Europe like a prairie fire.

The reader will already have perceived that here we have the clue to the appearance of witchcraft as a secret and organized cult. The Dianists of the sixth and seventh centuries had gone, and until the twelfth century we find only a few isolated executions of witches for practicing black magic. In the twelfth century these become more frequent. In the thirteenth century the swords of the troops and the fires of the Inquisition suppress heresy; and from that time on witchcraft is recognized by the Church as a secret heresy and a widespread organization.

The Paulicians, Bogomiles, Albigensians, etc., were, as usual, slandered by the orthodox. Psellus, one of the leading Greek orthodox writers of the tenth century, wrote a book "On the Operations of the Devils," in which he included almost as many fables as in his lives of the martyrs. The heretics, he says, used to meet at night by candle light and invoke the devils. When these appeared in the shape of animals, the lights were extinguished and the worshipers indulged in an orgy of sexuality with the devils and with each other. This amiable story passed all over Europe and was applied to the heretics everywhere. It will be enough to quote a letter of Pope Gregory IX to show the connection with witchcraft. In 1233 Gregory wrote to the bishops of Germany, urging them to seek out and persecute the heretics. The letter (given in the Latin in the "Annales" of Raynaldus, year 1233, p. 89) is one of those weird compositions which bring a smile to the lips when one hears Catholics claim some special divine interest in their church and its popes, but it is too long to be quoted here in full.

The Pope says that amongst these heretics "when a neophyte is received there appears to him a kind of frog," though some say it is a toad. Some kiss it shamelessly on the buttocks, others on the mouth, drawing the tongue and spittle of the animal into their mouths. Sometimes this toad is "as big as a goose or a duck." The neophyte next encounters a "man of extraordinary paleness, with deep black eyes, and so thin that his skin seems to be stretched over his bones." The neophyte kisses him and finds that he is "as cold as ice." The worshipers then sit to table, and a large black cat comes out of a statue, and all of them in the order of their dignity, kiss its buttocks. After a time the lights are extinguished and there is the usual orgy of sexual intercourse. If, the Pope gravely explains, there are more men than women, or women than men, they resort to sodomy. The candles are relit, and they sit again at table, when from a dark corner of the room comes a man "shining like the sun from the loins upward, but rough as a cat below." To this devil the neophyte is presented, and the faithful also give consecrated hosts which they have stolen from the churches where they have communicated.

This is almost exactly an account of a witch meeting, and the Pope adds another significant detail. These heretics, he says, declare that God is a tyrant, and that he unjustly condemned Lucifer to hell. Lucifer is the real creator of the world and prince of men, and in the end he will regain his place.

In point of fact, the Paulicians and Bogomiles and their kin had quaintly mixed the old Persian belief with some of the speculations of the Gnostics. The ancient Persians had believed that the evil principle had created matter which was evil. To Christians the evil principle was Lucifer, and the new heretics contended that Lucifer was one of the two sons of God, unjustly cast off by an overbearing father. He became their "prince" and "lord," and (unlike the Persians) they believed that he would ultimately triumph. This belief either led to or was due to—the details are necessarily obscure, as we know the tenets only from bitter enemies—another departure from Manichaeism. The Manichaeans had been very ascetic, deeming the flesh (as part of the creation of the evil principle) an evil thing; and it is clear that the Albigensians and other European heretics also led strict lives. But the glorification of Lucifer meant that matter and the flesh could scarcely be regarded as evil, and a reaction into orgies was inevitable. The witches, at least, had such orgies.

Here we have almost the whole of the ingredients of the witch-cult before our eyes. John of Salisbury, bishop of Chartres in the twelfth century, and others refused to believe in the *striga.* Pope Silvester II (Gerbert) was himself accused of magic. Moorish influence was beginning to teach Europe the elements of wisdom. And, curiously enough, it was the crown of this new development, the Scholastic movement, which completed the evolution of the witch and let loose the murderous forces of the Church.

THE CATHOLIC MASSACRES

I have several times noted a change of attitude on the part of apologists. In days of general ignorance and of poor historical scholarship it was possible to represent that a beneficent transformation was wrought in Europe when it passed from paganism to Christianity. Most believers still have a vague idea that this is "history," but the mass of facts I have already given shows how ludicrous it is. Europe passed into an age of dense ignorance, appalling brutality, and more sexual license than ever. The apologist therefore turns round and says that these things were inevitable on account of the barbaric invasions. We must allow time, he says, for the uplifting and beneficent action of the Christian religion.

The new apology is no better than the old. I have already shown that Europe got steadily worse for centuries after the triumph of Christianity. Now, in dealing with witchcraft and the Inquisition, we shall find that what is called the best part of the

Middle Ages created new and appalling evils; and it was precisely the most religious and most treasured part of the thirteenth century that wrought the evil.

The Scholastic movement, the rise of the great theologians of the Middle Ages, was one of the effects of the civilizing influence of the Moors. But the religion of Europe was so essentially mischievous that these great scholars spent most of their time in arid and sterile speculation which the modern world finds repellent, and they, instead of discovering the utterly fraudulent bases of the power of the Church, enlarged its power and caused it to exploit and torture humanity worse than ever. The greatest of them all was Thomas Aquinas (who died in 1274), and Thomas, an obese Dominican monk, so narcotized by his religion that he could, if necessary, have proved to demonstration that it was possible for Jonah to swallow the whale, came in time to deal with devils. He endorsed every fable that had entered Christianity from other religions. The world was full of devils and they were just as busy as even Gregory the Great had imagined. With their aid witches could certainly fly through the air by night. They copulated with human beings frequently, and had children. The pious monk even goes into details:

> When children are born of the intercourse of devils with human beings, they do not come from the seed of the devil or of the human body he has assumed, but of seed which he has extracted from another human being. The same devil, who as a woman, has intercourse with a man can also, in the form of a man, have intercourse with a woman.

Thus the case for the witches was completed by the highest authority in Christendom. The *succubi* (underlying or female) and *incubi* (overlying or male devils), based upon an ancient Babylonian myth about evil spirits, and the nocturnal wanderings, also based upon Babylonian and Roman ideas, were fully vindicated.

Fitly enough, it was in the very year after the death of Thomas Aquinas that a woman was for the first time burned as a witch in the sense that she had had intercourse with the devil; and it was the Dominican monk and Inquisitor Hugo de Boniols who condemned her.

He was trying a large batch of heretics at Toulouse, and amongst them was a noble lady, Angela de la Barthe, fifty-six years old, who was thus accused. Refined and wealthy, she nevertheless "confessed" under torture that she spent the nights in lasciviousness with the devil, and that she had given birth to a child with a wolf's head and a serpent's tail, which had to be fed on the flesh of babies. She used, she said, to go out nightly and steal babies for the purpose. This "monster" often occurs in confessions, and I imagine it means that some poor woman under torture had a miscarriage, and the embryo would look to the priests, who were

presumably unfamiliar with such things, like a monstrosity, a lizard, a thing with an animal head and a long tail.

A beautiful monument this poor noble dame's grave would be to the learning of Thomas Aquinas and his Dominican order and the God-inspired wisdom of his Church! It would be horrible enough if it were the only monument, but it was the first of certainly hundreds of thousands. The learned Sprenger in his "Leben und Lehre des Mohammed" (i, 264) quotes the estimate that *nine million* witches were put to death, and observes that it is "certainly not an exaggeration." It is generally regarded as a large exaggeration, but we have not the material to give even an approximate estimate. The Inquisition alone is said to have put thirty thousand to death. One judge, Remy, boasted that he sentenced nine hundred in fifteen years in Lorraine. In the diocese of Como a thousand were executed in a year. In three months in 1515 there were six hundred witches burned in the bishopric of Bamberg and nine hundred in the bishopric of Würzburg. In five years one hundred and twenty of the six hundred inhabitants of the small town of Lindheim were burned as witches. Some historians estimate that Henri III of France alone accounted for thirty thousand. Then there were the Protestant massacres.

Whatever the number, these Christian Popes and scholars perpetrated a crime in comparison with which the execution of one or two thousand early Christians by the Roman authorities is a mere trifle. Books about witches and devils began to appear. In 1211 one was written by a marshal of the imperial army. In 1220 a Cistercian monk wrote a treatise. In 1233 Pope Gregory IX, as we saw, endorsed the whole story. But it was the founding of the Inquisition and the suppression of open heresy which created the great witch-cult and inaugurated the terrible massacres. It was the greatest of the Popes, Innocent III, who bears the heaviest responsibility.

As the secular rulers and their bishops were considered slow in their struggle against the heresy that was spreading in every country, Gregory IX had, in 1232, taken the "inquiry" (*inquisitio*) out of the hands of the bishops and given it in charge of the Dominican monks, acting directly under Rome. This was the founding of the Inquisition as a Papal institution, but it was Innocent III, earlier in the century, who had given it a bloody example to follow. When the heretics of the south of France had laughed at the arguments of his legates, he had stooped to the device of appealing to the greed and lust of all the available military adventurers, and had declared the "crusade" which is known in history as the massacre of the Albigensians.

Pope Gregory, we saw, particularly directed the Inquisitors to seek heretics who were in league with the devil. Thomas Aquinas gave the Church a finished manual of devilry, and before the end of the century the Inquisitors in the south of France were con-

demning women for compacts or cohabitation with the devil. Such trials were still few, when another Pope, John XXII, gave a feverish impulse to the campaign.

The Papal court was then at Avignon. The hundred years of comparative virtue (since Hildebrand) which had followed the hundred and fifty years of vice were now over, and the Papacy was almost as corrupt as ever. Petrarch, who lived not far away at the time, called the "sacred palace" at Avignon "the sink of all vices"; and there were certainly not many vices that were not richly represented by the cardinals. One, however, was black magic, and when, in 1320, a bishop and archbishop or several cardinals sought to bring about the death of the Pope by magical means, John began to take a peculiar interest in the black art.

In every part of Europe the tribunals of the Inquisition now became busy with witches. Between 1320 and 1350 the tribunal at Carcassonne tried more than four hundred cases of magic, and of these one-half were executed. At Toulouse six hundred were charged, and two-thirds of them were handed over to "the secular arm" for execution; lest, of course, the spotless robes and white hands of the Church should be stained with blood. There was a terrible massacre at Berne, and large numbers were burned in Italy. Even an English bishop was accused at Rome of paying homage to the devil; and from Ireland came one of the most definite early cases of alleged witchcraft.

It was again a noble and refined dame, Lady Alice Kyteler (or Kettle): probably one of those high-spirited Irish dames, disdainful of clerical orders, who are happily multiplying in the country today. Lady Alice and her son and daughter and others were arrested and tried. The clergy found a pot of ointment in her room, so, clearly, it was the famous witch-ointment (partly composed of the blood and fat of murdered children) which gave witches the power of flying through the air on a broomstick. The Inquisitor found that she had had criminal intercourse with the devil, whose name is given as Robin Artison, and she was condemned. Lady Alice was smuggled away to England by her noble friends, but a young woman associated with her was executed.

The bishop of Kilkenny, in reporting the event, spoke of "this *new* pestilential set," and other clerics of the time make it begin fairly definitely with the fourteenth century or the second half of the thirteenth. When the persecutors were active at Berne in 1337, they complained that the pest had haunted the city "about sixty years." The Dominican Inquisitor Jaquier spoke in 1458 of this "recent" sect which held "synods of the devil," and ended its meetings with orgies. The Inquisitor Bernard of Como wrote that the *secta strigarum* (the witch sect) arose in the first half of the fourteenth century.

The meaning of this is clear enough. By the end of the thir-

teenth century the semi-Manichaean heresy which had spread from Armenia and Bulgaria to France was driven underground by the Inquisition or annihilated by troops. Witchcraft is its next form, as we see clearly in cases which presently occurred in the north of France. In 1390 the Paris Parliament had checked the persecution by transferring trials to the civil tribunals, but some decades later the clerics, who complained much of lay skeptics, returned to their work. A professor of Paris University, W. Adeline, was in 1453 brought before the bishop for denying the reality of witchcraft. In face of the terror the scholar fell on his knees, weeping, and confessed (as they wanted) that he was himself in league with the devil and had trampled on the crucifix. He was leniently dismissed with a sentence of imprisonment for life.

The clerics had regained power, and they made a fearful use of it. At Douai a woman was brought before the Inquisition on the ground that she was a Waldensian. She was forced to accuse others, who in turn denounced others, until a large number of victims confronted the Inquisitor. Under a promise of light sentences if they confessed, they all glibly agreed that they had gone to witch-meetings on oiled broomsticks, had met the devil in the form of a goat or ape, and had concluded with a general orgy. The savage Inquisitor then handed them over to the secular arm, and they, protesting that they had been deceived into making the statements, said that it was all false. Six of them were executed.

The Inquisitor next year sought to repeat his triumph at Amiens, but the good bishop, who seems to have been a sinner, pooh-poohed the story and discharged the accused. The Inquisitor went on to Arras, where the bishop was more pious or more greedy, and the charges spread from house to house until there was a reign of terror in the city. Under torture—one woman was tortured fifteen times—they recklessly denounced any acquaintance to get relief. A large number of victims were condemned, and men and women fled in panic from the city, which actually lost its commercial prestige. In 1491 the lawyers of the Paris Parliament took up the cases, analyzed the records, and found that the whole of them had been wrongly condemned; and one is pleased to learn that, by royal order, this finding of the Parliament was nailed on the door of the bishop's palace.

Except in England torture was habitually used in the examination of witnesses, and the tortures were fiendish. There was one especially used for women accused of witchcraft. This was a chair the seat of which was either studded with point-upward nails—one chair had two thousand nails—or a metal plate under which a fire was lit. There the poor creatures sat until they either accused themselves (or a neighbor) of consorting with the devil—or died. At Lindheim, where the most fearful persecution occurred, six women were executed because they confessed, under torture, that

they had stolen the body of a child for witch-purposes. After the execution the husband of one of the women opened the grave and found the child's body there uninjured; and the monk Inquisitor declared the body to be a counterfeit made by the devil and ordered it to be burned!

The Inquisition imposed heavy fines and confiscated the goods of its victims. The clergy, the Inquisitors, and the informers (who were never named in court) shared these funds. Such procedure would disgrace savages. Thousands of victims of the Inquisition had only one heresy: a good bank account.

Moreover, in the frenzy for witch-hunting that now set in even honest judges lost their heads and committed monstrosities of judgment. A case is on record of a little girl of eight years who was solemnly tried for witchcraft because playmates said that she could make mice. The poor child had made "mice" by folding and knotting her handkerchief into some fancied resemblance to mice.

And it was again the Popes who were responsible for the new epidemic. Eugenius IV had in 1437 urged the Inquisitors to look out for witches. They found plenty in France, Italy, and Switzerland, but in Germany their zeal was checked by comparatively humane rulers and bishops. The spirit that begot the Reformation was growing. But the German Inquisitors, Institor and Sprengel, reported to Rome that Germany was full of witches, of both sexes, and that they formed a well organized sect. A book had been published in German so describing them. The Pope, Innocent VIII, thereupon issued his famous Bull, "Summis Desiderantes," in 1484, lashing the clergy everywhere to the attack on witches. The Inquisitors themselves two years later compiled a manual for the use of judges—the notorious "Hammer of Witches" (*Malleus maleficarum*)—and Europe again stank with burning flesh and echoed with the groans of tortured women.

We cannot quit this section of the subject without a word about Joan of Arc: the remarkable girl burned as a witch by the Church in 1431 and (for political reasons) declared a saint by the same Church in our time. A full discussion would require an entire volume, and I will here merely summarize the reflections of Miss Murray in her book, "The Witch-Cult in Western Europe."

Miss Murray, the ablest writer on witchcraft in our time, is of the opinion that Joan was a witch. We have already seen enough to consider that proposition impartially. Maids of Joan's age were frequently witches. Moreover, Joan's greatest friend in the French army, Gilles de Rais (or Retz), was an acknowledged witch. Shaw's representation of Gilles in his play is very misleading. He was at the time, though in his early twenties, a very earnest and able soldier. He became a Marshal, at the age of twenty-five, and he is described in the "Grande Encyclopédie" as "one of the finest intelligences of the time." Unfortunately he had not a balanced

mind, and when he left the army to pursue his magical studies in his princely château, he fell into the most scandalous excesses, even killing children for his experiments. He is the original of the Bluebeard story. There is much probability in Miss Murray's contention that he vacillated between the two religions, but he frankly confessed that he had been a witch and he was executed as such. Joan chose him as her special protector in the army, and he was devoted to her.

Another courtier of the time, the king's favorite noble, Pierre de Giac, was a witch. Before execution—he also was a sorry scoundrel—he said that he had given one of his hands to the devil, and he asked that that hand should be cut off before he died. Miss Murray believes that the Duc d'Alençon himself was a witch, if not the Grand Master.

The evidence in regard to Joan is puzzling and contradictory. Time after time when she was asked a question, and an emphatic negative answer would be expected from any orthodox Christian, she refused to reply or replied evasively. She would not say if she believed fairies to be, as the Church certainly held, evil spirits. She would not explicitly reply when it was said that she had been taught witchcraft and magic. She would not swear on the Gospels, and would not repeat the Paternoster except in confession. She had seen "St. Michael" with her bodily eyes, in the shape of a "good man." Her "St. Catherine" was physically present somehow in her castle-prison. She had seen "God," in a scarlet cap and long white robe. She spoke throughout of "those of my party"—she had a secret sign on her letters for them—and she sometimes saw her saints, or the sources of her voices, "among Christians."

All this is counterbalanced by assurances that she is a good Christian, so that it is very difficult to reach a confident decision. There is certainly serious ground to reopen the question and analyze minutely the whole record of her trial. That is a task that could not be done here, and we must leave the question open. In view of our present knowledge of witchcraft there would be nothing in the least surprising if we found that Joan was a witch. But she was evidently neither a perfectly orthodox witch nor a perfectly orthodox Christian.

THE SECRET CULT

It is now time that we formally considered the question, what witchcraft really was. The prevailing, almost universal, opinion of those who at length rose against the persecution, and of the nineteenth-century writers on witchcraft, was that the cult or organization and all the details alleged about it were a creation of popular credulity and monkish imagination. The secret meetings or Sabbaths were thought to have been as fictitious as the ride through the air on a greased broomstick. The "devil" who is put

as the central object of the cult was declared a fiction. The witches' mark, the orgies, the homage, and all the rest were regarded as wholly imaginary. Inquisitors wrote their manuals of these things, and the unfortunate men and women confessed whatever they willed in order to put an end to the diabolical tortures. Death for witchcraft was preferable to a life thus prolonged; indeed very few in any case were ever acquitted by the Inquisition. Bernard Shaw's dramatic version of its procedure looks rather like a meeting of a committee of the Fabian Society to judge a member for, say, reading H. G. Wells. The Inquisitors had bowels of brass.

It is quite certain—we have already seen instances—that thousands of victims of the witch-hunters were good Christians, driven by torture to confess anything that the torturer wanted. Suicide was common amongst them. Remy, the French witch-judge, says that he knew fifteen cases of suicide in one year. But it is clearly a mistake to ascribe the whole of the details to imagination, fear, hysteria, or sex-obsession.

In the first place, torture was not used in England. A fiendish witch-finder like Hopkins had his own irregular way of torturing the women he suspected, but after arrest and during trial they were questioned without torture; and they tell the same story as the tortured witches of the continent. Miss Murray deals especially with English witches, and she makes this clear. What I am about to describe of their organization and ritual could be based entirely upon the testimony of English witches. They often gloried in their "religion." At Northampton a mother and daughter were led together to the scaffold. A priest exhorted them to pray, and "they both set up a very loud laughter," says an eye-witness, "calling for the devil to come and help them," and deriding Christianity.

Nor are all the testimonies to witchcraft merely the statements of prisoners. There was a remarkable case at Lille in 1661. A home for poor and ignorant girls was presided over by a Mme. Bourignon, a pious Christian, and she was horrified to discover that thirty-two of the girls were witches. There was no crowd-psychology or suggestion. In friendly conversation with her they explained that they had been dedicated in the religion as children and would not abandon it and become Christians.

"No," said a young woman of twenty-two whom she tried to convert, "I will not be other than I am: I find too much content in my condition."

It is, in fact, one of the most common and most distressed observations of the less fanatical Inquisitors that a very large proportion of the witches "blasphemed" to the end, as they say, and took pride in their religion. Cases are not unknown in which they sought death.

De Lancre, the famous French lawyer and witch-judge of the

seventeenth century, made a close study of the witches he tried and he wrote one or two books about them. Instead of finding the women terrorized by torture into confessing anything that the examiners wanted them to admit, he notes with great surprise and perplexity that they tell a consistent story, deliberately and even joyfully adhere to it, and unquestionably have a very real religion. From the long quotation from his works which Miss Murray reproduces, in old French, in her book I translate the following passages:

> A very distinguished witch tells us that she has always believed that witchcraft is the best religion. Jeanne Dibasson, twenty-nine years old, tells us that the Sabbath is the true Paradise where there is more pleasure than one can express. Marie de la Ralde, twenty-eight years old, a very beautiful young woman, deposes that she takes special pleasure in going to the Sabbath . . . as to a wedding, not so much for the liberty and license they have together (which, from modesty, she says she has never done or seen done) but because the devil kept their hearts and will so attached that it was hardly possible for any other desire to enter. . . . She went there with much more pleasure than to Mass, for the devil gave them to understand that he was the real God. . . . There are, in fine, witches so devoted to his diabolical service that no torture or torment can surprise them, and they say that they go to a real martyrdom and to death for love of him as gaily as they would go to a festival or a public rejoicing. When they are arrested, they do not weep or shed a single tear, either over their false martyrdom or the torture; and the scaffold is to them so pleasant that some of them are in a hurry to be executed, and they joyously endure the trial, they are in such a hurry to be with the devil.

In short, we have such a mass of testimony that is obviously not wrung from terrorized witnesses, we have such an abundance of cases in which the witch defiantly meets her end with the witch-creed on her lips, whereas a Christian tortured into momentary "confessions" would at least end in prayer and repentance, that there is no room for doubt about the reality of witchcraft. It was an organized anti-Christian religion. And there is, in every country, consistent testimony as to the main features of the cult. Local variations are given, but there is agreement on broad lines, and we have a fair knowledge of the secret religion.

In substance it has nothing to do with ancient paganism. It is monotheistic. All our accounts of it are written down by Christian clerks or judges, so that the central object of the cult is always spoken of as "the devil." The writers invariably state, however, that the witches insist that this being is "the true god." He is their lord, master and prince.

At times it seems as if the witches must themselves have used the word devil, saying that the devil was the real God. Lucifer, the brilliant son of the Old Testament God, and therefore a god, was the object of the cult. An early Christian legend says that Lucifer's only sin was pride—which is not a sin—and even Milton comes very near to making a god of Satan in his "Paradise Lost." It is

the Gnostic-Manichaean idea, or confusion of ideas, which I have previously described. The principle of darkness and matter is Lucifer; he is no longer evil, and he will eventually triumph. It is to reunion with him that the dying witches look forward.

At all events, the witches everywhere and unanimously speak of some living person who is to them "the devil"—their master or his representative in the flesh. Lady Kyteler of Kilkenny had her "Robin Artison." "Robin" seems to have been a common name for this mysterious chief. He visits the witches in their houses or in quiet places. He is incessantly approaching women and pressing them to join the secret religion. As a rule he is dressed in black or other sober ordinary clothes, though he has a special mark on his boot. But his movements are mysterious, and he impresses the women more or less with awe. None of them whose words are recorded give us a clear idea of how they conceived the relation of this chief to Lucifer. The better educated witches, as a rule, tell us nothing of their creed, and the ignorant women who talk most were possibly not fully initiated. To most of them the chief seems a semi-supernatural person, though in some cases they frankly speak of him as a quite well-known man of their own district, the secret organizer of the sect.

The chief had an assistant who helped to give notice of meetings, and so on. This man seems to have succeeded to the mastership when the chief died. There were no elections, so that the succession must have been by nomination. Heads of the local groups or "covens" also were appointed. The local unit of the cult was a group of thirteen men and women (or twelve and a leader) called a "coven," which seems to be a corruption of "convene." Possibly the idea was founded on the story of Christ and his twelve disciples.

The great assemblies or Sabbaths were, naturally, at the primitive festival times of the race, spring and autumn. The first, the Walpurgis Night of the German witches, was held on the eve of May 1st, and the second on the eve of November 1st. Later a midsummer Sabbath and one at Christmas were added, and in places there were other festivals on the Christian feast-days. There were lesser meetings, called Esbats, for business purposes and to report and deliberate on their magical practices, and in the end these seem generally to have been held on Fridays: possibly in derision of the Christian veneration of Friday, the supposed day of Christ's death.

The ritual of the Sabbath is so consistently given by the witches everywhere that we can confidently describe it. A few women under torture might "confess" that they had ridden on broomsticks and made ointment of babies' fat, but the reliable witnesses tell a quite plausible story. Some quiet spot in the neighborhood, a hill, a wood, or (if available) an ancient stone monument, was appointed for the meeting, and in the dead of night the witches found their way to it; generally on foot, as it was not usually far

away, but often on horse or ass. The hour of assembly was midnight, and the festival usually lasted until near dawn.

Paying homage to the chief was the first item. The living representative of Lucifer was on these occasions always disguised, and the women vaguely imagined that they were in the presence of their "god." They speak of him as having the form of a bull, a goat, an ape, a cat, a dog, or some other animal, and it seems clear that at least the lower part of his body was clad in the skin of a sheep or goat, the tail hanging behind. In some cases he seems to have worn a mask at the back of his head or above his tail.

Homage meant kissing some part of his anatomy, and there cannot be the slightest doubt, so numerous and consistent are the testimonies of the reliable witnesses, that kissing his buttocks was practically a universal custom. Old members might kiss his face, and even neophytes might be directed to kiss his cheek, arm, or thigh. Curiously enough, in the case of a phallic religion, as witchcraft certainly was, we very rarely hear of witches being directed to kiss the part which one would expect; though there may have been a special reason for this. But nearly every single witness speaks of kissing his buttocks, though they never use so polite a word as that.

And an important part of this ceremony was that mothers presented their children, particularly baby girls, to the "devil." The formula given by several witnesses is: "Great Lord, whom I worship, I bring you this new servant who desires to be your slave forever." The girls, it seems, returned at about the age of nine and repeated the homage in their own names, and the "grand mistress" or "queen of the Sabbath"—some lady who was closely allied with the chief—then directed them to renounce the Christian God, Jesus, the Church, the sacraments, the clergy and monks, and everything connected with the prevailing religion. In places, at least, they had to trample or spit on a cross marked in the ground. They then kissed the usual sacred part and received what was known throughout the Middle Ages as "the witch's mark." In England, especially, much stress was laid on this mark. The witchfinders, knowing that no torture could be used in the trial, as on the continent, concentrated on searching for the witch's mark in a suspect, and Hopkins used quite effective torture in finding it.

A weird chapter could be written on the marks that were reported in court. The thighs, buttocks and pubic parts of the suspects were minutely examined by the agents of the Holy Church, and every mark or pimple that nature had produced was described in grossly exaggerated language. Supernumerary nipples, which we now know to be fairly common in women, and are even found in men, were selected as indubitable proofs of diabolic action. They seem to have been examined with clerical magnifying glasses, as we read of immense teats in the most surprising parts of the witch's

anatomy. In point of fact, there seems to have been a general practice of marking those who were initiated to witchcraft at the Sabbaths. The mark was, however, a simple puncture made with an awl or sharpened bone. Whether anything was smeared on the instrument we cannot say, but the "insensible area" for which the witch-finders looked is simply a figment.

After the entire assembly had paid homage the chief received reports from local officers, and the dance, which seems to have been the most important part of the solemnity, took place. Dancing and feasting, in fact, occupied the remaining hours of the night. The witches brought food with them, and we may confidently suppose that the dance and the feast alternated. Ring dances, especially if there was a sacred stone, were common, but a kind of follow-the-leader dance, across country, was very popular. The women often visibly light up with joy as they describe to the judge the wild dance across the country, the "devil" often playing pipes, leading the way, his tail wagging before the crowd, and the long stream of witches, at the highest pitch of excitement, following in a line. The flute, drum, and other instruments also were used.

We have here a somewhat confused experience. Miss Murray calls this part of the solemnity "the fertility rites," and no doubt it was in a sense a continuation of the genuine fertility rites of the old religions. But one may conjecture that frank human joy in the sensual abandonment of the hour was the chief motive and one of the chief attractions of the cult. As we saw on an earlier page, there were virtuous witches who denied that they had ever seen any impropriety at the Sabbaths, and we must suppose that there were groups of a purely religious character or groups which did not invite their most ascetic member to the nocturnal orgies. That there was quite generally a sexual orgy is put beyond question by the almost unanimous testimony of the witches. On these four quarter days the Dionysiac urge which was in every healthy woman was given an entire freedom, and for several hours of the night the quiet woods of France, Germany, or England witnessed such scenes as had long ago been enacted in the scented groves of Antioch or Paphos.

The orgy as such was not the chief rock of offense to the Church. In practice the Church had never insisted on the quixotic counsels of Christ. What the Inquisitors fastened on was the charge of carnal intercourse with the devil; and it now seems clear that this was a reality. Quite commonly the witches, the untortured English witches as well as the continental, confess that they copulated with the devil, at any period after the age of twelve. It may seem strange that one man could be so generally charged, but there is a great deal to be said for Miss Murray's suggestion that an artificial means was used. Such things are known in older phallic religions, where women came to the priests to be deflowered.

In some places, either at the Sabbath or elsewhere, the "devil" celebrated a black mass. Animals were commonly sacrificed, and there is only too good ground to believe that children were occasionally sacrificed, especially to provide the blood at the black mass. The wafer was generally stolen from the Church, the man or woman going to communion and keeping the wafer dry in his mouth until he was out of sight. The most notorious case is that of the famous Mme. de Montespan in 1679. In her frenzy to regain the love of Louis XIV she got the Abbé Guiborg, who was clearly a witch, if not a chief, to say mass, with a child's blood in the chalice. The child was bought for "a crown." We have plenty of corroboratory evidence; and it is curious to find that Christian babies were never so used. Christian mothers of the time notoriously guarded their unbaptized children from the witches.

THE PROTESTANT MASSACRES

The Reformers brought no relief to the witches of Europe. Indeed it is of the essence of my view that witchcraft was a bitterly anti-Christian religion, and the Reformers were not likely, on their own principles, to be less hostile to it than the Catholics. Luther's sturdy common sense did, it is true, make him hesitate. He and Melanchthon are enumerated by the Jesuits (who now succeeded the Dominican and Franciscan monks as Inquisitors) amongst the heterodox as regards witchcraft. He did not believe in witches flying to the Sabbath; but he did believe in magical powers and he most particularly believed in the devil. It was the Protestant emphasis on the devil and on the Bible (which explicitly condemns the witch to death) that caused as great massacres in Reformed countries as in Roman Catholic lands.

There is nothing to choose between them. Far more witches were burned in Britain after the Reformation than before it. The stupid frenzy of James I—originating in one of the wildest legends, that witches had caused the terrible storms that kept his bride in Denmark—has scarcely a parallel in royal history. The loathsome activity of Hopkins and other witch-finders is in one sense as bad as the activity of the Inquisition; though British Protestant Law never permitted the diabolical tortures which disgraced Catholic countries and drove tens of thousands of innocent men and women to false self-accusations, insanity, suicide, and the scaffold. The bloody panic in Massachusetts, under Cotton Mather, in 1691-92 is almost as horrid a page as one can read in the history of medieval Europe.

Writers on the subject commonly describe the series of early critics who first wielded the pen against the witch-massacres. A Lutheran, Johann Weier, seems to have been one of the first critics, though his work "De Praestigus Daemonum" regards the women as possessed by the devil and merely questions the less plausible

phenomena. Several other Protestant doctors and professors (Ewick, Gödelmann, etc.), not generally mentioned in history, repeated the arguments of Weier in 1584 and 1585, long before any Catholic writer attacked witchcraft. At the same time an English squire of some learning, Reginald Scott, wrote a "Discoverie of Witchcraft" (1584) in which he denied the whole of the alleged phenomena. King James and various Anglican scholars replied to the book, and it is not paradoxical to say, while doing all honor to the critics, that the orthodox writers were right. Witchcraft, we have now seen, was, when it was quite sincere, a religion in deadly hostility to Christianity. When it was not deeply religious, it was a revolt against the Christian ethic.

It was half a century later when the first Catholic writers, the Jesuits Tanner (1626) and Spee (1631) criticized the witch-persecutions. What is more worthy of attention is that all the scholars of Christendom united for centuries approving the outrage. Now that we discover that witchcraft was an anti-Christian religion, the apologists will probably turn round and ask us to think it quite natural that it should be persecuted; forgetting that the discovery puts the witches on a level with the Christian martyrs, and that, while the Roman authorities put only a few hundred people to death, and in virtue of their secular laws, the Christian clergy made martyrs by the hundred thousand, if not the million, and on purely religious grounds. It is part of the general question of persecution or toleration; and any Church which *now* defends the use of bloody arms in self-defense at any period of history must refrain from complaint if it ever itself encounters persecution.

All the Weiers and Flades and Scotts and Spees of the sixteenth and seventeenth century had little influence on the persecution of witches; that is to say, on religious persecution in general. The massacres almost extinguished the sect. The growing spirit of liberty removed the occasion for it. Deists and Rationalists, who could strike at the very root of the principle of religious persecution, killed the witch-hunters. Montaigne, Bayle, Beccaria, Voltaire—such men brought the world gradually back to sanity and humanity. As the light increased in the eighteenth century even clerics looked in each other's faces and blushed for the traditions of their Churches. The Inquisition might ply its bloody trade in Spain until 1782, when Voltaireans came along, and in Spanish America until the middle of the nineteenth century. In rural districts the people might still hunt the witch. I found a case of witch-swimming in the London newspapers of 1825. There was a witch burned in a cottage in Ireland not twenty years ago. But the light increases, and the whole world now looks back with horror upon the ghastly and prolonged nightmare of the race—in the ages of faith.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Horrors of the Inquisition

The Massacre of the Albigenses—The Origin of the Inquisition—
The Infamy of Its Procedure—The Roman Inquisition—
The Spanish Inquisition

The Massacre of the Albigenses

BY modern history we mean a record of past events which is based upon a larger knowledge than the world ever had before and, above all, a critical use of the original documents. It is a science, and it is just as drastically opposed to religion as is the science of evolution. It entirely eliminates the supernatural from the chronicle of man's development; it shows that in the events in which we should most confidently expect the intervention of God, if there were a God—in human events—there is not the faintest trace of anything but man's own virtues and frailties: and it completely shatters the version of the human epic which Christianity had imposed upon the world.

But modern history has not excited the rancor and hostility of theologians in the same way as modern science. The reason is simple, and it is not wholly creditable to historians. Those human events which the historian studies are in very large part religious. The scientist may ignore theology when he describes his nebulae or his dinosaurs, his orchids or his diatoms. But religions and churches and all the phenomena of their life for five or six thousand years are a part, and a very important part, of the material of history. And a deadly conflict has been avoided only by the stratagem of distinguishing between sacred and profane history.

Historians do not now, of course, observe this distinction as rigorously as they were compelled to do in the days of Bossuet. Voltaire and Gibbon have not lived in vain. We have, in fact, a special branch of science and history combined—hierology, or the science of comparative religions—which seems to ignore the distinction; and the masters of *ancient* history talk to us about the religions of the Egyptians and Babylonians as freely as they discuss the costumes or customs of the old civilizations.

But observe how cautious, how diplomatic, they become the moment they must state something which contradicts the Old Testament or the current Christian version of history! As to

Christ and the cardinal events of European history which depend vitally upon religion, how many historians dare even touch them? They are "sacred history." At the most there is a formal recognition of the convention that Christ was "the most sublime moralist" that ever appeared; that the stream of history somehow changed its color after the "acceptance" (you never read of the compulsory enforcement) of Christianity; and that everything sinister in the ages of faith must be generously interpreted as the very natural conduct of a people quite different from ourselves.

Against these timid conventions of history, wherever religion is concerned, these pages are protesting. They show that the common belief that civilizations were vicious and stupid and brutal before Christ is founded upon a lie. They prove that the enforcement of Christianity was followed by such a clotted and sordid mass of coarseness and brutality as had never been known before in civilized history. It is no less mythical to suppose that Europe clung to Christianity until modern times; even these brutalized ancestors of ours, the moment they settled in more or less orderly civilizations, rebelled against the doctrines of the Church and the usurped authority of its corrupt clergy and had to be bludgeoned into submission.

The year 1000 was a very real turning point in the history of Europe. My friend, Professor Robinson, the very able historian of Columbia University, does not agree with me that there was a widespread expectation of the end of the world in the year 1000, but I once made some research in the chronicles of the time and I found much evidence of that expectation. At all events, the Iron Age, the tenth century, the low-water of civilization was ending. Rome and the Papacy, it is true, continued in their squalid degradation for another fifty years, but no one who knows history regards Rome as the center of light in Europe at any time after it ceased to be pagan. I do not forget its artistic distinction during the Renaissance because it was then pagan once more for a season.

Enlightenment came into Europe along two paths which were very far away from Rome. One was the road leading from the east along the valley of the Danube. The other was a strangely circuitous route, starting in the east, crossing the whole of north Africa and the Straits of Gibraltar, entering Christian Europe by the Pyrenees and the south of France.

It must suffice here to say that during the darkest age of Christendom, the tenth century, there was a brilliant and tolerant Mohammedan civilization in Spain, and that rays of its wonderful culture were passing the Pyrenees to enlighten the barbarians of Europe. The one scholar of the tenth century, Pope Silvester II (Gerbert), belonged to the south of France and learned his science in Spain; and he lasted four years as Pope and died in an odor of sulphur. It was, naturally, in the south of France that

the Moors had most influence. They even occupied it for a time.

Meantime the second stream was crossing Europe and reaching the south of France and the north of Italy. Heresy—revolt against the Christian religion—had taken deep and strong root in the Armenian district of the Greek Empire while the Latin world was too utterly brutalized to think at all. This heresy was Paulicianism, a mixture of Gnostic and Manichaean and primitive Christian ideas. Although one priest-ridden empress of the ninth century had, as all historians admit, slaughtered no less than one hundred thousand of these rebels, an emperor of the tenth century found it necessary to transplant two hundred thousand of them to the desolate frontier of his empire, next to Bulgaria.

The heresy soon reappeared in Bulgaria in the sect of the Bogomiles ("Friends of God"), who would have won the entire nation and spread over Europe if the Church had not used its customary spiritual weapon: bloody persecution. As it was, the Bogomiles, a most earnest and ascetic sect, sent missionaries over Europe, and from the beginning of the eleventh century onward we find various shades of this semi-Manichaean religion—(the true basis of witchcraft) appearing—on the scaffold, of course—in various parts of Europe.

It may be useful to point out the fascination of the Manichaean ideas which reappear in most of the European heresies. The fundamental idea was, as I said, that there were two great creative powers: one who created all that is good and one who was responsible for evil. It is usually said that the Persians believed in "two supreme principles," but the evil principle (the creator of matter, darkness, the flesh, sin, etc.) was not actually equal to, though at present in deadly conflict with, Ahura Mazda, the real God; because in the end Ahura Mazda would destroy the material world and judge all men. But it was an enticing explanation of the origin and power of evil, and it removed from God, the pure spirit, the responsibility for matter and flesh. It was more reasonable than Christianity. It rejected the Old Testament and all its moral crudity, regarded Christ as a wonderful spirit (but not God), scorned the priest-created scheme of sacraments and the whole hierarchy, and loathed the consecrated immortality of most of the priests, monks, and nuns of Christendom.

It was, in all its shades, a rival religion to Christianity, and I say confidently that it would in some form have ousted Christianity if it had not been brutally and savagely murdered. You never even heard of it? Well, that gives you the value of the history of these things as it is usually written. A few of the new writers will talk to you very learnedly about the Priscillian heresy (also semi-Manichaean) in Spain, and the Arian (or Unitarian) heresy which was widely adopted by the barbarians. But the Priscillianists had vanished—murdered, of course—by the seventh

century, and a little astute political bargaining had induced the Teutonic princes to adopt the Trinity (and large slices of Europe with it) and compel their people to do the same.

The story begins in the eleventh century. Christendom at large, or its Popes and bishops, were still, as a rule, too much interested in wine and women to bother about formulae, and too ignorant to understand them. But we pick significant bits out of the chronicles. In 1012 several "Manichaeans" are prosecuted in Germany. In 1017 thirteen *canons and priests* of the diocese of Orléans are convicted of Manichaeism and burned alive. In 1022 there are cases at Liège. In 1030 they bob up (and down) in Italy and Germany; in 1043 near Châlons in France; in 1052 again in Germany. In the early part of the twelfth century some "Poor Men of Christ" are burned in Germany.

In short, by the middle of the twelfth century Europe was seething and bubbling with heresy. The general name for the more important heretical sects, the Cathari, is the Greek word for "the Pure"; and it indicates the practical features in which all agreed. They regarded the Church as a corrupt human institution, generally scorned its sacraments, ritual, and hierarchy, despised its dissolute monks and nuns, and tried to get back to the pure teaching of Christ: voluntary poverty, strict chastity, brotherly love, and ascetic life.

Such were the Beguines and Beghards who, founded by a Belgian priest in the thirteenth century, spread a network of ascetic communities, more like the ancient Essenes and Therapeutae than the Christian monks all over Europe. They were severely persecuted, though *their* only heresy was that they did as Christ bade men do. Substantially the same were the Waldensians, the followers of Peter Waldo, of the same thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They called themselves the "Poor in Spirit," and literally obeyed every word of Christ; and so they were branded as heretics and burned in batches, sixty at one time being committed to the flames in Germany in 1211, and some being burned in Spain even earlier. The famous Flagellants of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries fairly come under the same general heading. The modern psychologist wastes his ingenuity upon them. The world and Church were so corrupt that they expected a speedy end of the world and they did penance for their sins and those of others. The Fratricelli, a detachment from the Franciscan Order whom the clerical corruption drove into heresy, belong to the same period, and were fiercely persecuted.

More important were the Lollards, the followers of J. Wyclif in England, and the Hussites of Bohemia. Wyclif's heresy—he was at first supported by his university and the nobles—was really a return to primitive Christianity; and it took such root in England that in the middle of the fourteenth century one-tenth

of the nation, some historians estimate, were Lollards. It paid the usual penalty of being true to Christ.

Meantime, as the king of Bohemia married an English princess, the Lollard ideas passed to that country, then one of the most enlightened in Europe, and, by the preaching of John Hus, a very large part of the nation embraced and developed them. The Hussites scorned the corrupt priests, monks, and nuns, attacked clerical celibacy, confession, the eucharist, and the ritual—in short, they were the nearest to Christ of all I have so far mentioned, and therefore the most deadly heretics. It took two hundred years of war and savage persecution to suppress them. At one time most of the nobles of Bohemia were Hussites.

But the name of Cathari, or Puritans, was particularly applied to various sects which united a zeal for primitive Christian morals with a tincture of the Manichaean philosophy. They were known as Patarenes in Italy, as Publicans in France and Belgium, and by other names in other countries. Their numbers were prodigious in the century which is precisely chosen as "the great Catholic century," the thirteenth century. Dante himself tells us how prevalent heresy, even radical skepticism, was in Italy in his day. Europe was in a fair way to desert Roman Christianity, and would probably have done so long ago but for that ghastly weapon of defense now devised by the Church, the Inquisition.

We need merely to glance at the story of the Albigensians to realize this. Albi, from which they take their name, was an important town in one of those lovely southern provinces of France which were to the country what southern California and Florida are to the United States. In these southern provinces the brilliant example of the Spanish Moors was known best, and during the eleventh century the heresy of the Bogomiles was imported into them by missionaries from Bulgaria or Bosnia.

In the Albigeois district the great majority of the population went over to the new religion. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the most famous preacher of the time, made a campaign there in 1147. He found the churches deserted and was unable to make any impression. The heresy spread over France, Belgium, western Germany, Spain, and north Italy, and the Papacy was thoroughly alarmed. One has only to read the reports sent to Rome, as given in the "Annales" of Cardinal Baronius. But the sequel will show that these Cathari numbered at least hundreds of thousands in France alone.

Pope after Pope angrily urged the secular powers to persecute them. Alexander III, in the Lateran Council of 1179, urged the use of force against them. To princes he gave the right to imprison offenders and—a ghastly appeal to cupidity which Rome was now beginning to use—to confiscate their property. To all who would "take up arms," as he said, against them he promised two years'

remission of penance and even greater privileges. Briefly, the Cathari were burned or imprisoned in many places, but in the south of France the princes and nobles favored them and were proud of their industry and integrity in a corrupt world. In 1167 the head of the Paulician sect (the mother of the Bogomile sect, which was the mother of the Albigensian sect) went to Albi, held a great synod, consecrated five new bishops, and gave the religion a splendid public triumph.

This was the situation when, in 1198, Innocent III, the greatest of the Popes, donned the tiara. Some of my friends gently chide me because I will not, as historians generally do, speak amiably at least of such profoundly religious Popes as Gregory I, Gregory VII, and Innocent III. The Catholic would do well to understand that, when non-Catholic historical writers have a complimentary word for such Popes they strain the evidence in order to conciliate religious readers. For it is just these men who did European civilization, and therefore the American civilization which awaited its development, the most deadly injury.

For nine years Innocent had monk-preachers in the heretical provinces, urging the bishops and princes to persecute, but they were quite ineffective. His chief legate, Pierre de Castelnau, received instructions in 1207 to arrange a warlike campaign of the princes, and most of the smaller nobles agreed. It is necessary for the reader to bear in mind that in the thirteenth century war meant *unlimited loot*, and the Albigensian towns were amongst the most prosperous in Europe. An acrid spirit was created, and the Legate was murdered. Angrily proclaiming that Raymond, Count of Toulouse, was responsible—Innocent in later life admitted there was no evidence, and it is in the highest degree improbable—the "great" Pope sent out a ringing call to arms, and heavily threatened Christian princes and knights who did not obey it.

There was no need of threats. Imagine the president of the United States informing the gunmen of Chicago—Christian knights in those days had no higher ethic—that he permitted them to invade and sack Los Angeles, Hollywood, and Pasadena, and you have something of a parallel. It is said by a contemporary poet that twenty thousand knights and two hundred thousand afoot converged upon the Albigensians. They were led by the Abbot of Cîteaux—as bloody a priest as Torquemada—and a seedy English-French adventurer, Simon de Montfort, whose purse was empty. The King of France was not in it—at first, only because his terms to the Pope were exorbitant.

The magnitude of the "heresy" can be guessed when we learn that after two years of the most brutal carnage the Albigensians were still so strong that, when the Pope renewed the "crusade" in 1214, a fresh hundred thousand "pilgrims" had to be summoned.

Innocent boasts that they took five hundred towns and castles from the heretics, and they generally butchered every man, woman and child in a town when they took it. Noble ladies with their daughters were thrown down wells, and large stones flung upon them. Knights were hanged in batches of eighty. When, at the first large town, soldiers asked how they could distinguish between heretics and orthodox, the Cistercian abbot thundered: "Kill them all, God will know his own," and they put to the sword the forty thousand surviving men, women and children. Modern Catholic writers merely quibble when they dispute these things. It is the Catholics of the time who tell us.

The Pope's behavior during these horrible years was revolting. I have fully described his twists and turns in my "Crises in the History of the Papacy" (based upon the Pope's own letters), and must here be brief. Raymond of Toulouse, to spare his people, submitted before the crusade began, although the Pope expressly told his legates ("Letters," xi, 232) to "deceive him and pass to the extirpation of the other heretics." His brutal treatment of Raymond, without any trial, earned the censure even of the king of France. He stopped the crusade after two years of almost unparalleled butchery, then yielded to the fanaticism of the monks and the greed of the soldiers, and reopened it. He was plainly sickened by the slaughter and the vile passions of his instruments, but he made vast material profit for the Papacy out of the monumental crime, and he left the world, which he soon quitted, a gift as deadly and revolting as his massacre—the foundation-stone of the Inquisition.

THE ORIGIN OF THE INQUISITION

Before I trace the development of the specific tribunal which we call the Inquisition, it is well to give the reader a word of caution about the literature of these matters. No historian in the world, even Catholic, questions that the Pope summoned this "crusade" and nearly annihilated one of the finest bodies of men and women of the time. But . . . . Were there really forty thousand killed at Béziers, or was it only *ten* thousand men, women, and children (especially women and children) who had their throats cut when the fighting was over? And did not the Albigensians hold opinions which were socially very mischievous? And so on.

Anybody who would ask me to respect the Paulists and Jesuits who trim the edges of a great crime in this fashion, and throw dust in the eyes of their followers, asks in vain. But a more serious fact is that these Catholic writers are now worming their way into works to which the general public turns innocently for information, not propaganda (or lies). Let me give two instances. The "New International Encyclopedia" is the most accessible work of general reference in America, and is generally good. But the article

on "The Inquisition" has quite obviously been written by a Roman Catholic, who gives neither his name nor his initials. It is unreliable from beginning to end, and is, in spite of its Jesuitical form, largely untruthful.

Oh, you say, people may be confined to that in Dayton, but I consult an authoritative work like the learned "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics." This is, in fact, one of the most scholarly of recent encyclopedias. But it has no article at all on witchcraft, and its article on the Inquisition is actually written by a well-known Roman Catholic apologist, Canon Vacandard! But he is quite a scholar, you may say. And I reply that there is not a wholly unbiased Catholic scholar in the world, and that Vacandard's article is a disgrace to the Encyclopedia. Let me quote a passage which will serve as text for this section. The canon begins by placidly announcing that the Spanish Inquisition is outside his scope; which is like writing "Hamlet" without the ghost, Hamlet, the King, and Ophelia. The Spanish horror is not treated elsewhere in the Encyclopedia. Then he says:

> From the twelfth century onward the repression of heresy was the great business of Church *and State*. The distress caused, particularly in the north of Italy and the south of France, by the Cathari or Manichaeans, whose doctrine wrought *destruction to society* as well as to faith, appalled the leaders of Christianity. On several occasions, in various places, *people and rulers* at first sought justice in summary conviction and execution; culprits were either outlawed or put to death. The Church for a long time *opposed* these rigorous measures. . . . The death-penalty was *never* included in any system of repressions.

That passage, occurring in one of the most scholarly encyclopedias of recent times, is one of the basest and meanest that ever came from the pen of an apologist. The death-penalty never included! Why it was, at the dictation of Christian bishops, made a part of European law by the Christian emperors of the fourth and fifth centuries, and for many it remained the law. I have just given hundreds of instances in the twelfth century.

Then we are asked to believe that "the people and rulers" did these horrible things, while the gentle Church tried to restrain them. That is an insult to our intelligence. No ruler or people ever moved against heretics without the impulsion of the Church, and at the period we are discussing the Papacy complained every decade that it could not get rulers to apply its own "rigorous measures": exile, infamy, confiscation, and destruction of the heretic's home. Innocent III, who, as we shall see in a moment, demanded the death-sentence, launched his ghastly crusade of murder and theft precisely *because* he could not get "people and rulers" to proceed otherwise.

And the meanest thing of all is that Canon Vacandard, and most of your modern Catholic apologists, raise over the bones of

those hundreds of thousands of murdered men, women, and children the smug and lying inscription that they were "dangerous to society." How? You will smile when you hear: like Christ, they advocated voluntary poverty and virginity! We know their ideas only from bitter enemies, and this seems to be the rock of offense.

Yes, but how *could* society persist if there were no private property, no soldiers (they opposed war), no procreation of children. And the answer again is simple: these counsels of Christ were (exactly as the modern Catholic theologian says) for the elect few, the "perfect," as the Albigensians called them, and the great body of the "believers" could own what property they liked, marry when they liked, and bear arms when necessary. They were, as Professor Bass Mullinger says in an article in the same Encyclopedia, men of "simple blameless life," and were not responsible for the brawls about the churches. Rome murdered a few hundred thousand real followers of Christ because they were not Christians.

In the "Catholic Encyclopedia" we expect anything, and I will notice only one remark of Professor Weber, who writes on the Albigensians. They were, he says, "offended by the excessive outward splendor of Catholic preachers." That is really rich. Let Professor Weber look up the letter (Migne edition, vii, 75) which Pope Innocent wrote in 1204 to his Legate. It is a scorching exposure of the general clerical immorality which Professor Weber regards, apparently, as "outward splendor." Innocent talks of the concubines (he uses a word which the modern police would not let me translate literally) of the priests and the monks everywhere, and says that their bishops can hunt and gamble, but are "dumb dogs that cannot even bark."

Let us return to the facts; though I trust the reader perceives the importance of noting here and there the trickery by which apologists divert the minds of the faithful from the facts.

I have given the early stages of the evolution of the Inquisition. Heresy was a crime in European law. Exactly, say some of the apologists; it was in those days thought to be a crime against the State and was punished accordingly. What miserable juggling with words! The Church *made* rulers and peoples regard it as a crime; and what was happening in the thirteenth century, the great age of heresy before the Reformation, shows this very clearly.

The Lateran Council of 1139 violently urged the secular powers to proceed against heresy; and they would not, to any extent. The Lateran Council of 1179 repeated the cry, pleading for the use of force and holding out tempting baits to those who murdered heretics. Pope Lucius II in 1184 made a new departure. He laid down the penalties as exile, confiscation, and infamy (loss of civil rights): threatened unwilling secular rulers with excommunication and interdict; and enacted that whereas under current

law a bishop was to try a heretic in open court when a man was charged, the bishop must now *seek out* heretics. In Latin the search for a thing is an *inquisitio*. Still very few secular rulers did more than shrug their shoulders. Heresy did not concern them.

Then came Innocent III, who had a perfect arsenal of anathemas, and who, when a prince ducked with a grin at the hurled anathema, set armies in motion and drenched the man's kingdom with blood (as Gregory VII had done). Innocent formulated the new principle of "persuasion" of heretics. There was a Papal seat at Viterbo, and the Pope was horrified to learn that not only the consuls (magistrates) of the town, but the chamberlain of his own were Cathari! He soon altered that, and he laid down this grim principle:

> According to civil law criminals convicted of treason are punished with death and their goods are confiscated. With how much more reason then should they who offend Jesus, Son of the Lord God, by deserting their faith, be cut off from the Christian communion and stripped of their goods.

It is Canon Vacandard who gives us that quotation: a perfectly clear demand that heretics shall be put to death! It was, therefore, not "people and rulers," but the great Pope, who, when there seemed to be some doubt amongst the jurists how far the old law against heresy was still in force, demanded death. St. Bloody would not be a bad title for Innocent III, "the greatest of the Popes."

Moreover Innocent—what an ironic name!—completed the foundations of the Inquisition by reaffirming, with heavier emphasis, that the bishops were not to wait for charges of heresy, but were to seek out heresy, or make an *inquisitio*. They were to have special officials, or "inquisitors," for this purpose. Innocent drew up explicit instructions for the procedure, and between 1204 and 1213 he issued four decretals ordering such searches in various places.

In 1224 the Constitution of Lombardy formally enacted sentence of death for heresy, and the next Pope, Gregory IX, endorsed this penalty and founded what is commonly called the Inquisition. Heretics were to be handed over to the secular arm for "adequate punishment"—of which we find the definition in the words I quoted from Innocent III—and, as bishops had shown themselves very remiss in the nasty work of seeking out heretics, the Pope took the job from them and entrusted it to the tender mercies of the newly founded Dominican and Franciscan friars, who took to it like blood-hounds tc a scent. Among the wits of the time the Dominicans were known as the *Domini canes*, "the hounds of the Lord," a very neat Latin pun on their name.

Thus the Inquisition, which meant originally a search for heretics conducted by the bishops, became a separate institution

under the direct control of the Papacy. This was not done at one stroke. Its birth is variously put by historians in 1229, 1231, and 1232. By the latter year, at all events, the Inquisition was established, and the hounds of the Lord felt the bloody rag at their nostrils.

Rome had discovered the solution of its dilemma. It did not want to stain its own fair robes with bloodshed, but it certainly did not want to leave the detection of heretics to secular powers, or few would be detected. Moreover, if heretics were tried by civil law, the law would not move until a charge was laid before it, and there would be a comparatively fair trial, the accuser facing the accused in open court; and again few would be condemned. In fine, these "confiscations" which Innocent III had recommended were becoming a very profitable source of revenue, and the Papacy wanted its share. The sordid scramble for gold amongst the bones of the dead had already begun.

Hence the Inquisition. These monastic agents of the Pope were to have independent courts, of the most monstrous description, and to ensure the condemnation of secret heretics; and they were then to hand them over to the secular arm and keep a sharp eye on any secular prince or official who failed to do his bloody work.

All this modern talk about heresy as "a crime against the State" is loathsome. There were in the thirteenth century few countries in Europe which the Popes did not claim to be fiefs of the Papacy, and few princes who were not held to be, in the literal political sense, vassals of the Pope. Gregory VII and Innocent III and their successors asserted that they were actually the feudal sovereigns of England, France, Spain, and other countries. A crime against the State was what they chose to *call* a crime against the State. The great majority of the secular rulers hated and thwarted the Inquisition—it was never admitted to England—and it was only priest-ridden rulers like Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain or those whose greed was interested, who would carry out the Pope's orders. Christianity was forcibly thrust upon Europe for the second time, as it had been in the fourth century.

The one material exception is the enactment of the death-penalty in the secular Constitution of Lombardy in 1222 and 1224. Here, at first sight, is an historical fact of great value to the apologist: while Canon Law did not clearly prescribe the death-sentence, an emperor, Frederick II, introduced it. But the joy of the apologist will be brief if he looks up the record of Frederick II. He was scarcely even a Christian. Instead of heresy deeply offending him, he hardly concealed the fact that he thought the Mohammedan religion superior to the Christian. What political motive he had for obliging the Pope—it is admitted that clerics induced him to do it—by thus enacting a law which the Papacy had then merely to adopt cannot be studied here. Canon Vacandard

observes that Frederick merely copied the common German law in his new constitution. Professor Turberville is frankly puzzled. But it is admitted that the law, savage as it was in form—the heretic was to be put to death or else have his tongue cut out—was not applied before the Pope adopted it; and that, as Canon Vacandard reminds us, in his first declaration on the subject in the year 1220, Frederick expressly based his law upon the words of Innocent III which I have previously quoted. A skeptical monarch borrowing, for political reasons, the words of one blood-thirsty Pope to oblige another blood-thirsty Pope, is not a very good basis for the claim that heresy was regarded as a crime against the State.

Pope Gregory IX had this law inscribed in the papal registry, compelled the secular authorities at Rome and in most of the Italian cities to enforce it, and, as Vacandard assures us, "did his utmost to enforce everywhere the death-penalty for heresy" ("The Inquisition," p. 132). In other words, as soon as there was a secular law prescribing the death-penalty, the Popes, with great delicacy, handed over heretics to the "secular arm" and tried to get the law adopted everywhere. It was made an imperial law by Frederick in 1237.

Venice almost alone in Italy defied the Papacy. Heretics were burned at Rome and at Milan, and the most fanatical monks were sent by Gregory as Inquisitors to other countries. Conrad of Marburg was sent to Germany, where he burned whole batches of heretics. The king of Aragon, later the king of Castile, were induced to ask the Pope for Inquisitors. Four Inquisitors were appointed by Gregory to various parts of Italy; and others were sent to Bohemia. As to France, even the sordid and comprehensive massacre had not crushed the spirit of the rebels and the Dominican monk "Robert le Bougre" (I may not translate the name, but you need know little French to understand that), as he was commonly called, was sent with ghastly powers. In 1239 he burned a hundred and twenty-three "Bulgars" in one town. Mr. C. H. Hoskins has published in America a short account of "Robert le Bougre and the Beginnings of the Inquisition in France." But you may read all these and further details in the history of the Inquisition by Canon Vacandard: the same gentleman who assures us in the "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics" that "the death-penalty was never included in any system of repression!" It had been included for more than eight hundred years, and it was merely disputed by canon lawyers how far the old law applied in the Middle Ages.

THE INFAMY OF ITS PROCEDURE

The Inquisition is an indelible disgrace to the religion which created it; the horrors of the Roman amphitheater were in comparison only a misguided exhibition of manliness; the amorous

license of Paphos or of Corinth was, contrasted with it, an amiable and innocent indulgence of human nature; in its procedure this holy court, presided over by the holiest of men, under the direct control of their holinesses the Popes, was the most infamous instrument of injustice and the worst fomenter of murderous cupidity that the world has ever seen.

And, lest any be tempted to think, as the simple-minded believer thinks, that, after all, these repressions merely removed, let us say, a million rebels, and thus proved the remaining fifty million Europeans to be orthodox and docile Christians, we must study the procedure of the Inquisition more closely. Its methods were so barbarous and stupid from the juridical point of view that we really cannot say how many of its "heretics" were real rebels. In one respect the situation was simple: if you were denounced for heresy to the Inquisitors, the best thing you could do was to go at once and declare yourself a heretic and abjure your supposed heresy. Denial meant, whatever your views really were, horrible torture and, if you still honestly denied the charge, certain death. We must make allowance for this. It is, in fact, part of the indictment of the Inquisition that it must have fined, imprisoned, tortured, and even slain a large number of Christians.

However, even allowing for this, the figures are significant. The modern apologists for the Inquisition, who ask us to smile and rub our hands and acquit the Church because they discover (they say) that the men and women murdered numbered only fifty thousand instead of three hundred thousand, take the line of proving that the Inquisitors generally tried immensely more prisoners than they executed. Vacandard points out how the famous Inquisitor Bernard Gui had nine hundred and thirty cases in one district between 1308 and 1325, and he handed over only forty-two to the secular arm. At Paniers five out of forty-two accused were put to death. And so on. What this really means is that nine-tenths or nineteen-twentieths of the men and women charged with heresy confessed that they were heretics and abjured the heresy. In other words, there were at least ten times as many heretics as those executed; the Inquisition was a monument of intimidation to put an end to the growth of rebellion against Rome.

Its procedure will make this clear, and the account I give of it in this chapter is based entirely upon Canon Vacandard's book "The Inquisition" (1908) and the article on the Inquisition by the Jesuit Father Blotzer in the "Catholic Encyclopedia." The Jesuit, of course, Jesuitizes here and there, but fortunately the Canon, unconsciously, gives away his colleague. It will be seen that, in spite of all the Catholic reviling of Lea's historical works, these writers have to agree with him in every word in this most important section. In fact, Vacandard bases his own work largely

upon Lea's most careful research, and Blotzer generally follows Vacandard.

When the friar-Inquisitors arrived at a town, they convened a solemn meeting of bishop, clergy, and people and announced that secret heretics were to be reported to them. There would be a "time of grace," usually a month, and heretics who voluntarily came forward, and confessed and abjured, during that period received only the lighter penances: prayers, fasts, pilgrimages, fines, etc. Meantime the Inquisitors, who were to "act with the bishop" (though he had no power), had to choose an advisory council of "good and experienced men"—twenty to fifty in number—and come to a decision only in conjunction with these.

A most beneficent provision, says the Jesuit! Actually the beginning of the jury-system in Europe, says the Canon! But who were these men, and what did they do? They were, as a rule, mostly priests and monks, with a few very orthodox laymen. In a few places quite a number of local pious lawyers—the decree stipulated that they must be "zealous for the faith"—were found amongst the "good men." They considered the names of the accusers, says the Jesuit; and, being local men, they might thus detect enmity or cupidity.

But Vacandard gives the show away. He quotes two of the leading Inquisitors telling us that it is the common practice to conceal the names of the accusers even from these men, and that they usually saw only a summary of the evidence carefully prepared for them. "Very few of them," the writers of the time say, "ever knew the name of the accused or the accuser, or saw all the evidence." An abstract case and selected evidence are laid before them. "They did not," says Vacandard, honestly, "have data enough to decide a concrete case." In point of fact, they did not decide it. They gave their opinion, and the Inquisitors decided. And when the Jesuit and the Canon assure us that the Inquisitors usually adopted their opinion, unless it was too severe (!), their only authority is another modern apologist.

The "jury" never hampered the Inquisitors. They took up their quarters, generally in a Dominican monastery, and received secret denunciations. At an early date it was decided by the Popes that two accusers sufficed. These are generally called "witnesses," but that is a parody of a judicial term. They were secret accusers, and not only were they never confronted with the accused, but their names were concealed. "Boniface VIII," says the Jesuit, "set aside this usage . . . and commanded that at all trials, even inquisitorial, the witnesses must be named to the accused." That statement of the "Catholic Encyclopedia" is a lie. Vacandard gives the words of Boniface, and I will translate them: "*Where there is no such danger,* the names of accusers and witnesses must be published, as is done in other trials." What danger? There is the rub.

The Inquisitors pretended that there was always danger of revenge, and Boniface's words would not affect their procedure in the least.

The accused are notified, and the terror begins; it has begun, in fact, the day the terrible monks have marched with their golden cross into the town. The Inquisitors had three ways of influencing the accused before it came to torture. The fear of death was the first. Do not imagine a man going to face a trial as he does today. *If he was denounced, he was guilty.* Impossible, you say; no Catholic writer, at least, would admit that. But it is a truism. Listen to the Canon: "If two witnesses, considered of good repute by the Inquisitors, agreed in accusing the prisoner his fate was at once sealed; whether he confessed or not, he was at once declared a heretic" (p. 128). Trial by the Inquisition did not mean an examination to find out if a man was a heretic. If two secret witnesses said that he was, he was; and all the "third degree" and torture was merely to make him confess that he was and abjure his heresy. Bernard Shaw's theatrical representation of a trial is quite absurd.

If this certain knowledge that he would die a horrible death unless he came and abjured his (perhaps imaginary) heresy did not move a denounced man, he was confined to his house and harried and weakened in various ways. If this was not enough, two visitors were sent to put him through what is now known as "the third degree." If he still denied that he was a heretic, he received the grim summons to the Inquisition.

It was no use asking who accused him. Gregory IX, Innocent IV, and Alexander IV forbade the Inquisitors to tell the names; and the declaration of Boniface VIII did not alter matters. All that the man could do was to name any enemies he had in the town. By another refinement of clerical procedure, unknown in mere human law, slaves, women, children, and convicted criminals could lodge an accusation. Religion alone listened to such witnesses; but then religion is so very important, the apologists say. Moreover, it was no use the man protesting that he had attended mass regularly, and so on. Outward conformity did not count. He was denounced for *secret* heresy; he was guilty of it—all that he had to do was to abjure it.

He could not bring a lawyer. That good and great Pope, Innocent III, had in 1205 sternly forbidden lawyers to help heretics "in any way"; and any lawyer who ventured to do so would very soon be on trial. A saintly friar in France who defended a rich and pious patron of his order, whose goods the Inquisitors wanted (and got), ended in prison. Father Blotzer, it is true, tells us that the rule of excluding lawyers was soon relaxed, and "universal custom" allowed a legal adviser. And Vacandard, the real authority, explains that this is the opposite

of the truth. Pope Innocent had referred to *confessed* heretics, and at first Inquisitors allowed lawyers to suspected or accused, but the law was soon taken to apply to all heretics.

A man could not bring witnesses: or they would be on the list of heretics the next day. On the other hand, witnesses could be put to the torture to give evidence against him. If one witness cared to say that his charge could be supported by so-and-so, the man was brought and tortured until he told the desired lie. In practice one witness would suffice; and in Spain, at least, he got his share of the spoils.

Unless, therefore, a man had in him the rare stuff of a real martyr, he meekly acknowledged that he was a heretic, and he abjured the heresy. He was then required to denounce others, or "name his accomplices." If he thus confessed his heresy and named a few others, he merely got: a heavy penance, a pilgrimage, orders to fast for years, to build a church, pay a heavy fine, wear a hideous cross sewn on his clothes, etc. If he persisted in denying that he was a heretic, or refused to name others, he was taken into the next room.

The Inquisitors, with great humanity, always showed the man (or woman) the instruments of torture first. These were, as a rule, a horrible scourge for flogging, a rack (for pulling out the limbs until the joints cracked), a *strappado,* and a brasier of burning coals to be applied to his bare feet. The *strappado* was a pleasant little arrangement by which a man was suspended by the wrists from the ceiling, and jerked downward whenever he refused to say that he was a heretic. As a further inducement heavy weights would be tied to his feet. Strong men died from it.

I have told how torture was deliberately introduced into the procedure, at the request of the Inquisitors by Pope Innocent IV. No one disputes that. "The Church is responsible for having introduced torture into the proceedings of the Inquisition," says Vacandard (p. 147). But, says the Jesuit, airily, curiously enough, torture was not regarded as a mode of punishment, but purely as a means of eliciting the truth; and, of course, it was the naughty civil courts which gave the Pope the idea. What is curious enough is that the Jesuits and Paulists of the twentieth century, demanding "liberty" in Protestant countries, can write so callously and insincerely about the horrors perpetrated by their Church when it had the power. "Torture is," says the Jesuit, "seldom mentioned in the records"; and he himself admits that, as it was done outside the court, one would not expect to find it in the records.

Torture was habitual and appalling. "On the whole," says this gentle Jesuit, "the Inquisition was humanely conducted"; and the Canon tells us that Savonarola (an orthodox and most pious Puritan) was tortured seven times, certain witches of Arras

were tortured forty times, thirty-six Knights Templars—tough folk, one would imagine—died under torture at Paris and twenty-five at Sens, and so on. The rack, thumbscrews, strappado, and burning coals are certainly "humane" instruments.

But the Popes (who introduced torture) did their best to check the excessive zeal of Inquisitors, both apologists say. Clement V said that the accused must be tortured only once. Yes; and no Pope moved a finger when, all over Christendom, the Inquisitors found that, though torture could not be "repeated," it could be "continued," on the next day and as many days as they thought fit. Clement had spoken only of the accused. Then, said the Inquisitors, we are quite free to torture witnesses, to make them denounce people; and again not a single Pope rebuked or checked them. The Popes at first said that no cleric, being of a holy estate, must be present at the torture; and Alexander IV and Urban IV said that they *might* be present so that everywhere the Inquisitor bent over the writhing victim and shrieked his "Do you confess?" There was generally a political reason when Popes restrained the local zeal of the Inquisition anywhere.

If the victim persisted in denying that he was a heretic, in spite of torture, he was handed over to the secular arm; that is to say, after Gregory IX had succeeded everywhere in having the secular authorities adopt the death sentence for heresy. In face of the horrible death in front of them many now "confessed," and they were imprisoned for life. Imprisonment was quite a humane business on the whole, the Jesuit says. They often had good cheer, saw their friends, and so on. Yes—sometimes. There were two kinds of prisons, strict and less strict. Rich heretics generally got the latter, and money will buy comforts and privileges in most places. But it is disgusting even in their case to make light of their lot. Without trial, on the mere denunciation of two men who might be enemies or tortured witnesses or men bribed to bring about the confiscation of their property, they have, for a "heresy" which they have abjured, if it ever existed, lost all their property, seen wife and children reduced to beggary, and been imprisoned for life.

A word about this "confiscation." It is, Professor Alphandery rightly says, "of supreme importance for the economic history of the Inquisition"; and Vacandard admits that it was Lea who first brought out its importance. The goods of a fugitive or of a man imprisoned for life or condemned to death were confiscated. Moreover, the Inquisitors within ten years of the establishment of the Inquisition got from the Popes the right to impose fines, or to commute the lighter sentences for money-payments. If you did not want to wear a yellow cross on your coat for life, to spend three years in jail, to live on bread and water for two years—pay up. Then there were the appeals to Rome against excessive sen-

tences: that merciful safety valve against injustice of which the apologists make so much. It meant that you paid at Rome.

Is there even a Roman Catholic business man who does not now see the Inquisition in a new and ghastly light? It was a scramble for gold on a soil red with human blood. Who got the profit? We know quite well. First the secular authority; and that is, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the main reason why heresy was "a crime against the State." That is why the kings of France permitted tens of thousands of their subjects in the south to be imprisoned for life or burned, why Venice dealt with its own heretics, why the Popes so readily denounced Inquisitors, like the Spanish, who were not under their own control. Secondly, the bishop and the Inquisitors got a share. Thirdly, the Papacy, which published no balance-sheet, got its share. Oh, everybody hated heresy in those pious days! Segni, a distinguished Catholic writer of the sixteenth century, said: "The Inquisition was invented to rob the rich of their possessions."

By a refinement of this "humane" procedure, which did so much for "the general civilization of mankind," the "Catholic Encyclopedia" says—look it up, article "Inquisition," if you cannot believe me—even dead men could be accused of heresy. Let two unknown witnesses say that a man, even forty years dead, had been a secret heretic, and his children or even grandchildren were ruined. For him there was no chance of "repentance." He was an unrepentant heretic. His bones were dug up, paraded through the street, and burned. His widow and children were robbed of every dollar. Vacandard tells us of one famous Inquisitor, Bernard Gui, who had eighty-eight of these posthumous cases in six hundred and thirty-six! But, of course, they were on their guard against any mere feeling of greed. The Popes warned them. Inquisitors and secular rulers sternly resisted temptation. Yet Vacandard quotes the Inquisitor Eymeric bemoaning: "There are no more *rich* heretics, so that princes, not seeing much money in prospect, will not put themselves to any expense."

To finish with the prisons. The common sentence was "strict prison": solitary confinement, often in chains, on bread and water in the foulest dungeons conceivable. I have been in the medieval dungeons at Venice—into which those wicked Voltaireans of the French Revolution let a little daylight—and can imagine the horror of life imprisonment in them. We shall see that the king of France, who had no tenderness for heretics, forced the Pope to interfere with his Inquisitors in the south of France for the barbarity of their prisons. Hundreds died in them.

And now let us take a glance at the solemn ceremony which closed the work of the Inquisitors. On a Sunday morning they gathered the culprits, the clergy, and the people in some great church or public square, and read out the sentences. The unre-

pentant were then handed over to the secular authorities with a recommendation to mercy—and a stern assurance, from the Pope, that unless those men and women were burned at the stake within five days the magistrate or prince would be excommunicated and the city or kingdom laid under the appalling blight of an interdict. Then the Dominican or Franciscan agents of the Pope washed their hands, and these modern Catholic apologists ask us to observe how clean they were.

THE ROMAN INQUISITION

The criminal procedure of the Middle Ages was grosser than any man can imagine nowadays: as gross as the medical or any other procedure of the time. It has taken two hundred years of criminal and penal reform to give us the system we have today, and that is far from perfect. But the secular criminal procedure of the Middle Ages was innocent and refined in comparison with the procedure of the Holy Church. It tortured the accused, it is true; but no lawyer that ever lived, in the most imperfect civilization, would have admitted justice in the mixture of fanaticism, cupidity, and brutality which the Jesuit and the Canon have described for us.

This was the Roman Inquisition: the tribunal set up by the Roman Church in nearly every country except Spain. England never admitted it, except in one brief episode. The Scandinavian countries, which had few heretics, never had it. It failed also to get a firm foothold in the southeast (Bulgaria, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Roumania, and Hungary), where the heretics were too powerful to let it settle permanently or act considerably. In Bohemia and Poland it has not a great history. In the former kingdom, where four hundred and fifty nobles signed a protest against the burning of Hus, the Papacy had to use force on a larger scale—war—to murder heresy; and in Poland there was not much to be done.

In Italy itself rebels against Rome were extraordinarily numerous and strong by the beginning of the thirteenth century. In the specially Papal town of Viterbo the Pope found that nearly all the authorities and his own chamberlain were Cathari. In Florence heretics and skeptics were extremely numerous and outspoken. From the time of Frederick II and Gregory IX onward, therefore, there was a terrible struggle and large numbers were plundered, imprisoned, or burned. One fierce Inquisitor, Peter the Martyr, was assassinated in 1252. Venice, as I said, kept the profits of the business to itself and defied the Popes. In the north the Waldensians were so numerous that the decimating procedure of the tribunals could not check them. In 1488 the Pope flung a force of fifteen thousand soldiers upon them, and the soldiers were beaten. In 1510 the Inquisition moved further armies against them, but they survived in great numbers in the valleys of the Alps until the ter-

rible Vaudois massacres of the year 1655 contributed their share to the "unity of the Church."

Catholics boast that in Rome itself, where the Popes directly controlled the tribunal, there was singularly little persecution. One Catholic writer who is occasionally quoted, goes so far as to say that no man was ever put to death by the Roman Inquisition. One can hardly believe that he never heard of Giordano Bruno! But the truth is that the Papacy has taken good care to keep the records of the Inquisition in Rome from the profane eye of the historian. Dr. L. Pastor, the Catholic historian of the Papacy, tells us that when Leo XIII, with a flourish of trumpets, threw open to the world the Secret Archives of the Vatican, he searched in them for the records of the Inquisition. They were not there. The Pope had had some documents removed before he threw open the Archives!

On the whole, we should not expect to find much burning of heretics in Rome itself, for the simple reason that a semi-Manichaean would hardly choose to go and propagate his gospel under the very nose of Gregory IX or Innocent IV, and in a city that had clerics in every second house. But let us make no mistake about the responsibility of the Popes. The Inquisition in Florence, in France, in Germany, or in Belgium was the Papal Roman Inquisition, as directly controlled and guided by the Popes as was the Inquisition of Rome itself.

In the south of France the activity of the Inquisition was almost as horrible as in Spain. I have in an earlier section referred to the Dominican monk Robert le Bougre (he was supposed to be a convert from the neo-Manichaean or Bulgar religion), and in glancing at the work of this man even the courtly Father Blotzer is moved to say that some of the Inquisitors "seem to have yielded to a blind fanatacism" and "deliberately to have provoked executions *en masse*." On May 29th, 1239, the brute burned one hundred and eighty heretics, including the bishop of the place, in a very small town of the province of Champagne. The "trial" of this immense number of denounced did not last a week. The bishops of central and northern France had reported that there was no heresy in their territory, but Robert found it everywhere. After a few years of gross and murderous activity he was himself deposed and imprisoned by the Pope.

It was mainly in the south of France that the Inquisitors were active. The fearful massacres of the Albigensians at the beginning of the thirteenth century had by no means extinguished the rebellion. In 1241 and 1242, especially, the Inquisitors provoked such anger by their conduct that one of them was assassinated. The Pope compelled the Count of Toulouse to lead his troops against them, and the war or "crusade" was resumed. They were, however, now not numerous enough to sustain the shock of armies.

Their last town was taken from them, and thousands were added to the hundreds of thousands of their martyrs. It would be safe to estimate that there were at least a hundred times more semi-Manichaeans put to death for their religion in fifty years in the south of France than there had been Christians put to death in three centuries in the early Church. And that is the record of one small area in one half-century.

When the soldiers had made the land "safe for heroes," the Inquisitors set to work with redoubled brutality. Their excesses were so great that repeated complaints were sent to the king, Philip the Fair, and it depended entirely on the momentary color of his relations with the Pope whether he intervened or not. In 1290 they made a victim of a notoriously pious and charitable friend of the Franciscan friars, Fabri, finding him a heretic when his lips were sealed by death and confiscating his estate. In 1301 the king sent representatives to investigate the charges against the Inquisitors, and they found the prisons so foul and deadly, and the procedure so gross and unjust, that the king complained to Rome. Two of the Inquisitors were suspended, and their powers were curtailed in France. Later Pope Clement V got such complaints from Bordeaux and Carcassonne that he had to send two cardinals, and they found a sordid system. Clement had, within the limits of the barbaric ideal of the Inquisition, some feeling of humanity. When he died, the Inquisitors resumed their work with more "zeal" than ever and, as a result of more than one hundred years of bloodshed, robbery, and vile treatment, they persuaded the southern provinces of France to become orthodox.

Unfortunately, says Vacandard, in extenuation of these crimes, heresy in the Middle Ages was generally associated with anti-social ideas. To prove this he devotes a long chapter of his book to the tenets of these heretics of southern France. He finds what I have already described: the inner circle, the elect, of the Albigensians were vowed to celibacy and voluntary poverty—just as the monks were. He does not make it sufficiently clear that the mass of the Albigensians married and held property like all others, and I may add that their teaching the right to commit suicide, of which much is made, is now generally recognized. But the broad historical situation completely discredits this loathsome way of defending the Popes by libeling the rebels. These southern provinces of France were, after the Mohammedan kingdoms in Spain, the most prosperous and contented in Europe, and they were ruined when the "heresy" was ruined.

Two particular incidents,—the burning of Joan of Arc in 1431 and the condemnation of the Knights Templars in 1312—fitly illustrate the spirit and procedure of the Roman Inquisition in France. Whether Joan was a witch or not, she was vilely drawn into a death-trap by having the use of male clothing practically

forced upon her, and the recantation she signed was fraudulently replaced by another.

The crushing of the Order of the Templars is one of the grossest single exploits of the Inquisition. The king of France wanted their wealth, and, as Vacandard himself candidly says, the Pope "truckled" to him. This was Clement V, the one Pope in whom, up to the present, I have had to note some semblance of humanity. From the time he had bought the tiara, with the connivance of the French king, and his name is the one most frequently quoted by apologists when they would illustrate the liberality of the Popes, I may add that he lived a life of royal sensuality in the Papal palace at Avignon and is more than suspected of tender relations with the Countess de Talleyrand-Perigord. He died worth more than $2,500,000. This was the good Pope, the humane Pope, who permitted the Templars to be robbed and murdered after one of the grossest travesties of a trial in history. Large numbers of the Knights died under the fearful torture rather than lie about their own Order.

It was in connection with the trial of the Templars that the Inquisition had its one experience on English soil. It is hardly necessary to say that this does not mean that there was religious toleration in medieval England. The fearful persecution of the followers of Wyclif and the later hanging, burning, beheading and quartering of Protestant and Catholic rivals are well known. The death-sentence was decreed in 1400.

But England dealt with its own heretics; and, in fact, when Edward II was informed of the false and incredible stories told of the Templars, he bluntly refused to believe them. Pope Clement V assured him that the Knights had confessed these things—he probably omitted to describe the tortures—and in 1309 two Inquisitors were admitted into England to conduct a trial. They were refused the right to torture, and, as they could find no proof of guilt without that barbarous instrument, they complained to the Pope. Clement the Humane angrily demanded that the king should permit torture, claiming that Church law was higher than English civil law. In the end he bribed the king, in the customary Papal manner, and the Templars were tortured and destroyed. A pretty record for almost the one Pope who is quoted as "checking the zeal of the Inquisitors."

In southern and western Germany the Inquisitors were at first as bad as in France. Conrad of Marburg, the ascetic friend of St. Elizabeth, was almost as brutal as Robert le Bougre. An accused person was harshly ordered to reply simply "yes" or "no" to the charge, and if he did not at once say "yes," he was condemned and sent to the stake. We read with pleasure that Conrad was one of the many Inquisitors whom the people assassinated, and that the bishops of Germany angrily protested against his Inquisition.

When Frederick II died the Inquisition was checked, but later the Popes re-imposed it, and large numbers of rebels were put to death.

With the growth of heresy on a very large scale, at the Reformation, the Roman Church had to reorganize its Inquisition. What is now called the Holy Office is its reconstructed successor. It was created in 1542 by Paul III with the title of The Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition, or the Holy Office. Humor is a thing unknown in the Vatican. Its permanent court of six (later eight, and eventually thirteen) cardinals was supposed to be the final court of appeal on charges of heresy. But the times are evil, and the "sacred" machinery is stored away in the Papal furniture repository, awaiting the dawn of that more religious age which (the Italians say) American Catholics are going to inaugurate.

THE SPANISH INQUISITION

Every good Catholic will note with satisfaction how clearly I differentiate between the Roman and the Spanish Inquisition. His "Catholic Encyclopedia" informs him that the latter was rather a "political" or semi-political institution; that the kings of Spain jealously controlled it; that the Popes repeatedly protested against it. The Protestant historian Ranke more or less yielded to the Catholic writers of the last century who made this distinction. It is very convenient. Most people know nothing about the horrors of the Inquisition except in connection with Torquemada and the Spanish tribunals. Shocking, you tell them; but, of course, that was a Spanish state-institution, and the Popes earnestly protested against its excesses.

But few of my readers will be under any illusion as to why I recognize the distinction. It is little more than a geographical convenience. The Inquisition in Spain was so characteristic, so rich in its opportunities, so successful in the total number of its murders, that it deserves to be considered separately. As to this plea of political and secular character, even Catholic priests sometimes reject the subterfuge with disgust. Bishop Hefele, one of the most resolute Catholic apologists of the nineteenth century, naturally adopted it in his "Life of Cardinal Ximenes." But when the work was translated into English (1860) and had to face the fire of British scholarship, it had a preface of Canon Dalton entirely repudiating this theory. "The Inquisition originated not so much in political as in religious motives," he says, and "no contemporary authority asserts the contrary." It is mild language. The Spanish writers he quotes emphatically represent it as a purely religious tribunal, and the shades of Ferdinand and Isabella, if there are such shades, must have warmed the atmosphere of cloud-land with their language—which was vigorous—when the first modern apologist raised this

mendacious plea that the Spanish Inquisition was anything but strictly religious.

What I said about the economic side of the Inquisition supplies an explanation which will occur at once to the reader. It was a question of the *division of the spoils*. Sixtus IV and his successors greatly disliked the Spanish Inquisition because all the confiscated wealth remained in Spain. The Popes raised a little by receiving at Rome appeals—those humane and beneficent appeals—from the sentences of the Spanish Inquisitors, and remitting penances for a money-payment. But the Spaniards retorted by refusing to recognize the Pope's dispensations, and there was an unholy struggle.

The Spanish people, every historian tells us, were tolerant and disinclined to quarrel, but the preachers lashed them, especially against the Jews, and from the fourteenth century onward there were frequent pogroms. In 1391 four thousand Jews were killed in Seville alone. But Jews, unless they had once embraced Christianity, did not come under the cognizance of the Inquisition, and, merely reminding the reader that the final expulsion of the Jews in 1492, when (on a very moderate estimate) two hundred thousand were driven abroad with every circumstance of brutality and impoverishment, must be added to the ghastly account of the Christian religion, we must here ignore them. It is an ironic comment on the supposed "anti-social" doctrines of heretics that these expulsions of Jews and Moors ruined the brilliant civilization they had created in Spain just as the massacre of the Albigensians ruined Languedoc and the massacre of the Hussites ruined Bohemia.

Until the second half of the fifteenth century the Inquisition set up there by Gregory IX had comparatively little influence. Neither people nor rulers wanted its bloody work. With the accession of the fanatical Ferdinand and Isabella, however, and the fall of the last great Moorish city, Granada, a new era opened.

Even in the case of Isabella it is an historical fact that the priests compelled her to act. For a long time she refused the solicitation of the Dominican monks, but she yielded at last to the grim and overbearing Torquemada.

The details of the work of the Inquisition in Spain must be read in Sabatini's "Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition" (1913): a work strangely lacking in picturesqueness and, in its effort at impartiality, falling short of the truth in the general impression it gives. A small history of the Inquisition has still to be written—Lea's seven volumes are sound, but no one today reads a work in seven volumes.

Let us keep a sense of proportion. The record of Christianity from the days when it first obtained the power to persecute is one of the most ghastly in history. The total number of Manichaeans, Arians, Priscillianists, Paulicians, Bogomiles, Cathari, Waldensians, Albigensians, witches, Lollards, Hussites, Jews and Protes-

tants killed because of their rebellion against Rome clearly runs to many millions; and beyond these actual executions or massacres is the enormously larger number of those who were tortured, imprisoned, or beggared. I am concerned rather with the positive historical aspect of this. In almost every century a large part of the race has endeavored to reject the Christian religion, and, if in those centuries there had been the same freedom as we enjoy, Roman Catholicism would, in spite of the universal ignorance, have shrunk long ago into a sect. The religious history of Europe has never yet been written.

It is unnecessary to add that the Reformers followed for a time in the bloody footsteps of the Popes. But when Catholic apologists eagerly quote the sentiments of Reformers and the executions of Catholics by Protestants, they betray the usual lack of sense of proportion. A twelve-century-old tradition of religious persecution is not likely to be abandoned in a few decades. This particular kind of savagery, the infliction of a horrible death for opinions, had been introduced into Europe by the Christian leaders—ancient Rome never persecuted for opinion or had any standard of orthodoxy—and it had got into the blood. The killing of men for their beliefs by the early Protestants was murder just as was the killing of men by the Inquisition. It is a mockery to ask us to detect any divine interest in Churches during those fourteen centuries of ghastly injustice and inhumanity.

And there is this further difference. Protestant Churches have abandoned the principle that you may slay a man for heresy. The English law "De Haeretico Comburendo" (for the burning of heretics), framed and inspired by Roman Catholicism, was abandoned two and a half centuries ago, though the English Church retained absolute power in the land. One may speculate as to whether a Protestant Church might at some time revert to the old ideal, if it had the old power. I think not; but, as no Church ever again will have the power, it is idle to speculate.

But death for heresy is the actual law of the Roman Catholic Church today. Vacandard and others convey to their non-Catholic readers that Rome has repented like every other Church. Not in the least: it has not sacrificed one syllable of its teaching about heretics. I am under sentence of death in the Canon Law of the Roman Church. I have in my popular work, "The Popes and Their Church," shown that about the end of the last century, when the new generation of apologists were busy with their glosses on the past and their pretty appeals for universal tolerance, a new manual of Church Law, specially authorized by Leo XIII, written by a Papal professor, printed in a Papal press, was published. It was in Latin; and probably few Catholics in America will fail to be astonished to learn that the author states, and proves at great length,

that the Church claims and has "the right of the sword" over heretics, and only the perversity of our age prevents it from exercising that right! More recent manuals of Church Law have the same beautiful thesis. It is today the law of the Roman Church. Remember it when you read these subtle Jesuits and eloquent Paulists and unctuous bishops on the "blunders" of the past and the right and duty of toleration today. The Inquisition (the Holy Office) exists. The law exists. And you and I may thank this age of skepticism that we keep our blood in our veins.

CHAPTER XXIV

Medieval Art and the Church

Art and Religion—Christ and Apollo—The Age of Faith and Ugliness —The Cathedral Builders—The Painters of the Renaissance

Art and Religion

WHEN the good American sits down to arrange his grand tour of Europe he makes an interesting discovery. He must not fail, he is told, to visit at least a few of the cathedral towns of England, where he will see glorious buildings which all wealth and skill of modern America cannot create. France? Yes, there is Notre Dame at Paris, and there are all the treasures of the Louvre, and then there are the cathedrals at Amiens, Chartres, Rouen, etc. In Spain he must not miss the cathedrals of Seville and Burgos, the Murillos in the Prado and at Seville, etc. In Italy, of course, it will take weeks to see the unique wonders of Rome, Florence, Venice, Pisa, Milan. And, if he is rich, he may try to smuggle into America a small painting, an ivory crucifix, a piece of old lace —one of a thousand things that the colossal wealth of America cannot produce.

Evidently, he reflects, there was a time when this sleepy old dame Europe could do things. When was it? And some pupil of the Jesuits or the Paulists will tell him, with the smile of the virtuous person whose snowy innocence has been vindicated at last: "In the Middle Ages, my friend. In just those centuries which those damnable books of yours describe as a dyspeptic mess of stupidity, coarseness, burning flesh, and strong ale. And it was the religion of the Middle Ages, the religion represented to you as the blight of European civilization, which inspired these immortal, inimitable, world-venerated embodiments of beauty. We produce these things no longer because that religion no longer fires the heart and exalts the imagination of the race."

From the first I promised that we would examine the virtues as well as the vices of the Middle Ages. I am too old an artist to paint a picture in monotone; nor should I expect to meet the wishes of my readers if I presented the balance sheet of the Christian religion with every petty item meticulously recorded on the unfavorable side and most valuable credits omitted from the other side.

Thousands now pass annually from the Churches to the vast army of the churchless: hardly any pass in the opposite direction. And the chief reason is that when a believer opens a Rationalist work he learns something that had been concealed from him, whereas, when a Rationalist opens a Christian work, he learns nothing. It is the modern apologetic, with its distortions, suppressions and antiquities, which is ruining the Churches.

But let us come back to medieval art. For ages to come, until the hand of man can no longer maintain their venerable frames, the great cathedrals will chasten the pride or vanity of a more scientific race. For all time the beautiful paintings of the Middle Ages will be the masters of the living masters of the art. New schools of painting and architecture and sculpture may rise and fall, but those princely achievements of form and color will never lose their power to enthrall and uplift. Do not, pray, imagine that this chapter is going to attempt the quixotic task of suggesting that the art of the Middle Ages has been, like the virtue or the wisdom or the happiness of the time, exaggerated.

What we are going to consider is whether the Christian religion inspired this art; and let me give you at once a number of reasons for approaching that issue with an open mind.

A few years ago I sat in the solemn gloom of Seville cathedral and bowed before its stupendous majesty and grace. Then, as is my custom, I reflected. Another temple, a Mohammedan mosque, had previously existed on the site, and it was torn down that this church of Christ might rise disdainfully upon its ruins. But all agree that the mosque was, in its own fashion, as superb as the Christian cathedral. The surviving mosque at Cordova, the palace at Seville, the Alhambra at Granada, compel us to believe that.

Now what was the common inspiration in the Mohammedan Moor and the Christian Spaniard? Not any element of Christianity. Moreover, the Moors created immortally beautiful things within four centuries of the founding of their religion; but the Christian cathedrals which we cross sea and land to visit did not appear until more than a thousand years after the founding of Christianity, and the Christian pictures not until several centuries later.

Reflect again, on the strange succession in the efflorescence of the arts. First comes the triumph of architecture and sculpture. Painting, which can as admirably express religious emotion, still waited a century or two. Poetry, which would seem from the start to have been the fittest art to be inspired by religion, waited still longer. Except Chaucer and Dante, whom not one in ten thousand read today, can you name off-hand one Christian poet before the age of Humanism? Music, as amenable to religious inspiration as any art, was the last of all to reach the stature of genius; and half the great masters of even religious music were not Christians.

Strange how unevenly this inspiration of religion was felt by five arts, each of which was as capable as the other of giving a sublime expression to religious emotion.

Further, and this brings us near to the heart of the matter, when we speak of the art of the Middle Ages, let us conceive exactly in our own minds what we mean. By the Middle Ages we understand, roughly, the time from about 500 to 1500 (or 1600) A. D. In many respects, the Middle Ages lasted until the nineteenth century, but we may draw a line with a bold stroke at about the year 1500, when science was reborn, printing was invented, the earth was discovered, and the Reformation began. That leaves a thousand years for the Middle Ages.

Well, unless you have a technical interest, there is not a building, a picture, or a statue in Europe that you will cross the street to see that belongs to the first half of that millennium. The beautiful buildings belong mainly to the thirteenth and later centuries, the beautiful pictures mainly to the fifteenth and sixteenth. In other words, the great artistic inspiration of Europe began at the same time as the mighty rebellion against the prevailing religion. The earlier half, or more than half, of the Middle Ages, when religion was most profoundly and generally believed, was artistically barren. It is just when the modern spirit begins to invade the Middle Ages that great art appears. During the three centuries of magnificent artistic creativeness the church had to slay hundreds of thousands of rebels and to lay its iron-tipped lash on the backs of millions. There is ground for inquiry.

Finally, there is greater art in Europe than the medieval art. No one disputes the supremacy of Greek architecture, sculpture, and literature. In the museum at Athens there are gold cups which, a leading expert says, are as fine as anything produced in the Middle Ages; and they belong to the old Cretan civilization. Egyptian art needs no praise, and such fragments of imperial Rome as remain will match in beauty most of the artistic creations of later Christian Rome—are, in fact, far superior to anything produced in the Rome of the Popes for more than a thousand years after Rome became Papal. And beyond Europe is the art of India, of China, of Japan.

So the argument assumes a broader form, and we are told that it is religion, not this or that religion in particular, which inspires art. Is it not the *temples* of Athens and Egypt you admire? Are not the marble statues which the world treasures effigies of gods and goddesses? Here is the very latest American writer on the subject, Von Ogden Vogt ("Art and Religion," 1926), assuring us that "religion has been historically the great fountain source of art." He quotes another recent writer saying: "Art will never arise and develop among men unless it has a foundation in religion." This, says Mr. Von Ogden Vogt, is an exaggeration, but "something like it is true."

And I would, with becoming modesty, point out to these dogmatic gentlemen, who issue their works from American universities, that this is a historical statement, and that scarcely a single historian of art ever makes it. They ought to know. Here is one of the latest and most original, Elie Faure's "History of Art," a sumptuous four-volume translation of which appeared in America in 1921. Faure surveys artistic creations from the beginning of civilization, and somehow he quite fails to see that religion is the great inspirer of art—least of all, we shall see, of medieval art. Religion has been a great *employer* of art, but otherwise Faure traces the evolution of art as if religion did not exist.

Here is another comprehensive study in two fine volumes, Mr. Luebke's "Outlines of the History of Art" (the American edition rewritten by Russell Sturgiss in 1922). Luebke is more generous to religion than Faure, but you fail to learn from him that religion is the great inspirer. You do not read it either (if you read German) in Springer's "Kunstgeschichte" (eleventh edition 1921) or Rosenberg's "Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte" (third edition 1921) or even the Catholic Franz von Reber's older but excellent "History of Medieval Art" (New York edition 1887), of which I am going to make considerable use. It is in religious writers, not in historians of art, that you read the dogmatic statement that religion inspires art, and that the Christian religion inspired medieval art.

I have just pointed out one root of the fallacy. Organized and wealthy religions *employ* the artist, so his creations have very largely a religious character. Beethoven and Mozart are sung in the Catholic churches of America today; and both artists were apostates from the Catholic faith when they wrote the music. Pinturicchio, a very wicked little skeptic, painted the pretty mistress of Pope Alexander VI (for the Pope, in the Vatican) as a very modest and demure Virgin Mary. Fra Filippo Lippi, as amorous a monk as ever lived (which is saying a good deal), painted most beautiful and most correct religious pictures. In Faure's "History of Art" I notice half a dozen photographs of statues of the goddess Aphrodite, as finely executed as any statues of Mary in the world; and they are all portrait statues of prostitutes, with whom the sculptors were probably familiar.

I would rather here point out a second root of the fallacy, as I know no writer on art who has drawn attention to it; except that Faure attributes the decline of Athenian art in great measure to "the reign of intellectualism." It is a pregnant thought. Great art so commonly accompanies religion because it occurs in an early phase of the evolution of civilization, when religion still dominates the majority. Art decays when religion decays because intellectualism has taken the life of *both*, not because it has weakened art by destroying religion.

Once, being invited to open a debate in some artistic corner in New York, I maliciously gave the thesis: "America never had an art and never will." Artists came in large numbers to see me slain, but, if I remember rightly, I won the vote.

The civilization of the United States was formed from fragments of three nations—to speak only of the original French, Dutch, and English—which had had their great artistic efflorescence centuries before.

Athens artistically decayed when its philosophical period opened. Egypt had a high art six thousand years ago, and it had other artistic periods of distinction only after prolonged confusion and rejuvenation. It is a general historical truth that a nation's time of high artistic creativeness comes at a relatively early stage of its development, though the love of beauty and technical excellence may be conservatively maintained, as in China, Japan, and India. The law holds good of Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs —quite generally, in fact.

I ascribed it, long before Faure's book was written, to a "reign of intellectualism." Take the English Bible as a sample of the English mind at the time; for it was not written by literary geniuses. No group of men in the English-speaking world could write like that today. It is psychologically impossible. We are too intellectualized. We have lost the art of instinctive concrete thinking. The imagination has been enfeebled as the intellect developed. The language has changed, and is a thousand times more abstract, because we all—not merely philosophers and scientists—do far more abstract thinking. Words which to Shakespeare's hearers must have seemed "words of learned length and thundering sound" are on our lips every day. His simple, spontaneous, concrete imagery even our poets cannot experience.

In this light the art of the Middle Ages begins to be intelligible. There was plenty of religion, but no great art, during more than half of the Middle Ages. For the remainder there was very much less sincere religion, yet very great art. There is no connection with religion except that religious organizations or communities had most of the money to employ art and had sufficiently lost their original puritanism to appreciate it. But the real cause was that the tribes which had destroyed the Roman Empire had slowly settled and grown into the Italian, French, German, and English nations, and they were due to experience their artistic springtime. They learned what civilization was, and they infused all their young vigor and richness of imagination into its customary first manifestation, art: as the first Greeks to reach the Mediterranean, the Arabs when they reached the Persians, the Toltecs and Aztecs when they reached the Mayas, had done.

Thus there is a general law of these "golden ages" of the nations. I am not writing a manual of the history of art, so I must

be content with short indications which the reader who is specially interested may verify. It is a very general rule that a nation has one golden age of artistic creativeness, and it comes at the beginning of the full development of civilization. You will find that in the case of Egypt (which, however, had, like Persia, reconstructions and rebirths), Assyria, Persia, Athens, Rome, the Byzantine Empire, the Moors, and the new European nations. I do not admit any law of decline and death of civilizations, yet there is something like a spring and early summer, with a riot of color and energy, once the winter of barbarism is over. This occurs at a time when the religion is still generally believed and enforced (though not necessarily, as we shall see, believed by the artists themselves), and, as man gives most of his resources to the gods, the art serves religion. It is a coincidence. The next and higher phase of civilization destroys religion and enfeebles the artistic inspiration. Where there is not a *progressive* intellectual development (Egypt, Babylon, Persia, China, India), the artistic level remains comparatively high, and the mass of the people remain religious.

We have to see whether the great art produced in Europe from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century is not explained on these lines. Dr. Franz von Reber, a Catholic art-director, writing in the heart of Catholic Bavaria, prefixes to his "History of Medieval Art," a twelve-page summary of his survey. There is not a single reference to religion in it, except that here and there he notices that pure Christianity is antagonistic to art. He does not grasp the law that I have formulated, but the whole story which he tells is consistent with it. In a sheltered area of Europe in the eleventh century architecture first reaches distinction. By the thirteenth century most parts of Europe are settled and prospering, and then the great age of architecture and sculpture occurs, and the age of the great painters opens. The only reference to religion which he and other writers make here is that one aspect of this creative period is that the laity of Europe have at last wrested art from the monks and made it human, even when it is religious.

CHRIST AND APOLLO

It is the boast of the Roman Catholic, and a commonplace observation of the artist, that the Protestant chapel is cold and uninspiring, the Catholic church warm, artistic, pleasant and stimulating to the emotions. The Reformers themselves would have met such a boast with a snort of contempt. This was precisely what they aimed to create. The Catholic church represented a thoroughly pagan version of Christianity. Their own stern and bare meeting places expressed a return to Christ. They were worshipers of God, not of Apollo. If a man or woman could not throb and thrill with devotion in a direct communication with God, he or she was not yet a Christian.

So the early Church had believed for centuries, and it is the only correct interpretation of the message of Jesus. Ritual is fossilized religion. Vestments and incense and candles are evidence of low religious vitality. Jesus scorned the beautiful temple, the picturesque garb of the priests, the set festivals, the music, the book of words. A man must address himself directly to God, in short prayers. One of the most delicious absurdities of Catholic worship is that the Lord's prayer is introduced (and in Latin!) in the middle of a service that lasts an hour and a half. We can, of course, easily see that Christ did not compose the prayer, which is a compilation of earlier prayer-phrases, but it was written for the express purpose of showing that long services were unnecessary and undesirable.

There was a second reason why pure and primitive Christianity scorned art. Jesus quite certainly said—if we accept any part of the gospels as authentic—that the end of the world was near. The gospels, as we have them, were written so late that we cannot accept on their authority any particular word or deed attributed to Jesus, yet this idea of the speedy approach of the end of the world is so characteristic, and it so strongly tinges the whole ethic ascribed to Jesus, that it seems reasonable to believe that there was an historical Jesus, an Essenian, warning men to meet the coming judgment in purity and poverty. Could anything be more widely removed from the Dionysiac urge, the Apollo spirit, of the Greeks? What had such communities to do with art?

And when these followers of Jesus found themselves, as they soon did, living amongst the pagan crowds of the Greek and Roman cities, there was a third reason why they distrusted and disliked art. The religious use of it was essentially pagan. The Greek and Roman religions were, at that late date, not matters of sentiment. You were not transfigured with awe and devotion when you turned your thoughts to our Father Zeus or Father Diu (Jupiter). You thought of their love-affairs and family jars and you smiled. They were gods and so you gave them your grain of incense, and attended the festivals when priests—not a consecrated caste, but lay officials like yourself—in becoming costumes paid the communal respect to them. Without art all this would have been insipid, so the temple was a museum of art. Every sense was gratified. Even the nostrils were tickled. The room was full of beautiful statues, pictures, altars and odors. In the article on the Middle Ages in the "Encyclopedia Britannica" my friend Professor Shotwell, of Columbia University, says:

> In the realm of art the "Middle Ages" had already set in before Constantine robbed the arch of Titus to decorate his own, and before those museums of antiquity, the temples, were plundered by Christian mobs. The victory of Christianity—iconoclastic in its primitive spirit—was but a single chapter in the story of decline.

This was the fourth century, and Professor Shotwell's direct aim is to extenuate the artistic sterility of Christianity in the early Middle Ages by reminding us that the Church, when it did at last relax its puritanism, inherited a decadent art. Dr. von Reber says much the same (p. 73): "The general debasement of art and the conceptions of Christianity worked together to destroy that perfection of outward appearance which is the vital principle of all art." We quite admit that the golden age of Roman art was over, the golden age of Greek art long past, when Christianity spread. But what concerns us for the moment is that the pagan religions employed all the art that there was to evoke a sensuous response in worshipers, and it was of the very essence of Christianity to resist this. From its Hebrew parent, the Jewish religion, it had inherited a great distrust of statues and pictures. Christ went further and condemned temples, ritual, sacrifices, vestments, festivals and so on. Christianity stood for a stark spiritual nudity. The slightest titillation of sense was a contamination. Not even the slenderest sketch of Christ or any of his chief early followers was bequeathed to the Church. Art served the devil.

It is related in history that the Emperor Severus, who died in 235 A. D., had a bust of Christ in his private chapel. Whether this means that the emperor had an imaginary portrait executed by one of his pagan sculptors or that the Christians were in some places beginning to patronize art, we do not know. But most probably it was a pagan sculpture, for the Fathers are almost uniformly severe against art. The most liberal scholar of the early Church, Origen, wanted to have painters and sculptors excluded from the Christian body. There had to be meeting places, since Christ's predicted end of the world had not happened. There had to be, the gospels said, commemorations of the last supper; and this easily became a ritual with ceremoniously garbed priests.

Moreover, the bodies of the martyrs could not very well be just thrust into their niches in the catacombs with a mere mention of the name. Members of the Christian community who could paint or carve were invited or permitted—we do not know when—to decorate the graves and walls. Art could not be entirely excluded from any human enterprise, but the religion itself was anti-artistic, anti-sensual, as long as it was pure. And there was as yet no veneration of Mary, and the legends of fair girl-martyrs—in fact most of the more picturesque legends of the martyrs were not forged until centuries later.

It is therefore immaterial that during the first three centuries the Christian body had very little opportunity to encourage or inspire art. It was against its principles to patronize art. St. Jerome, one of the few literary artists—I mean one of the few writers with a really good Latin style—shuddered with fear of hell because he dreamed one night that Christ had sternly accused him of being a

Ciceronian. No expert writer on art who notices the subject fails to point out that the pure teaching of Christ, the sternest asceticism, was hostile to art. The senses were to be starved. They were the devil's avenues to the soul. And the whole story of later Christian art is a story of departures from Christ and approaches to Apollo on the part of the degenerating Christian body.

The first concession was when the persecutions ceased and the emperor was converted to Christianity. The new religion now had liberty of worship, large crowds of worshipers to house, and great wealth with which to build. It at once ignored as quite impracticable the injunction of Jesus that his followers should worship God in spirit only, without temples. All Christians have ignored it ever since. The real reason is that no religion would survive so severe a test as that. The flock needs shepherds, and the shepherds need dogs. The idea of the consecrated caste of priests and of the "mass" had already been developed in the Church. There was now a priesthood with an instinct of self-preservation.

So the Church decided at once to have large places of worship —basilicas, they called them—built with the gold of Constantine and his successors. Architects dispute whether these primitive churches were built on the model of the Roman public basilica (or public hall) or of the private hall in a large Roman house in which the Christians had hitherto been accustomed to meet, or some other type. That does not concern us. The main idea was to avoid the model of the Greek or Roman temple.

But from the first, concessions were made to human nature and to the ambitions of the priests themselves. The basilicas were handsome structures, often richly decorated. Luebke, who is more disposed to say a word now and again in favor of religion, speaks of these fourth-century basilicas as "superb" and "impressive." Reber, who is more detached and conscientious, speaks of "meager and monotonous architecture" with "magnificent colored decoration."

It is enough that the Church began at once to employ art. It gave art no inspiration. Rome was at the time a glorious city, with miles of beautiful marble temples, public buildings, triumphal arches and colonnades, and this early Christian art certainly did not rise above its models. But the cult of Apollo had begun. The Church was not yet in a position to compel the pagans to join it. They had to be attracted. And, since the story of Jesus did not seem very effective in that respect, and the Romans shrank from its bleak asceticism, the artist had to be introduced.

Toward the end of the century the Church got the political power to crush all its rivals and enforce its creed by imperial decree on the whole Roman world. Here was a crucial moment in the relation of the Church to art. Since there was no longer (in theory) a need to attract, the Church could afford to be Christian and abandon the allurements of art. In point of fact, the Church had already

at the end of the fourth century, got so far away from Christ that real Christians, like Helvidius and Jovinianus (early Protestants), were condemned and persecuted. Art was now permanently enlisted. Human nature will not long tolerate any religion unless there is a little human nature in the religion. Man makes gods in his own image and likeness.

Historians at this point generally bemoan the vandalism of the Church in destroying the pagan temples with all their artistic treasures, and there is now a tendency to restrict the Church's responsibility for this. The Catholic archeologist, De Rossi, held that fewer temples were destroyed, and more adapted to Christian worship, than had been supposed. Reber says:

> In reference to such adaptations, it has become the fashion to maintain that the Christian emperors were wisely desirous of preventing the destruction of the temples of the ancients; but this preservation was, in reality, rather owing to an interference with selfish abuse of the buildings and their materials by individuals than to any real respect for them as monuments of art.

In the year 399 the Emperor Honorius ordered that all rural temples should be destroyed and that those in the cities should be preserved as "civic ornaments." Twenty-seven years later the Emperor Theodosius decreed: "All pagan temples still remaining in perfect preservation are to be destroyed or consecrated by the sign of the cross." In point of fact, few were preserved. Of the more famous pagan temples only the Parthenon at Athens survived. The most resolute vandalism dare not lay its hands on that. It was converted into a church. But the Scrapeum of Alexandria, all the beautiful Greek temples of Diana and Aphrodite, all the greater temples of Rome, were either destroyed or left to decay. Priests and monks, especially in the east, led mobs to the wreck of the fairest buildings; and of the immense mass of art-treasures they had contained only a few fragments have come down to us.

A writer on art naturally deplores this vandalism, as he must call it, but I do not stress it from our present point of view. The Christian leaders had taught that the gods and goddesses of the pagan world were devils, and so this iconoclasm was quite inevitable. The chief point is that Christianity, in destroying the old art, could not create a new, because it refused and disdained the service of art as long as it was faithful to the principles of Jesus. "In short," says Reber, after reviewing the first few centuries, "primitive Christianity gave no impulse to the arts." I do not see how any person could expect it. In the fourth century, when it became less Christian and more wealthy, when emperors and courtiers and scholars began to attend church, the architect, painter, and sculptor were employed for Christian work. But, says Reber, examining what remains of their achievements, "all such protection

and encouragement were of little more avail than is medical aid to a hopelessly decrepit body."

Christian art was young, you may say. One must allow it time to develop. But all the authorities are agreed that it degenerated, rather than advanced, during the fourth and fifth centuries. The Roman world was in decay, and there was no part of its life which the new religion was fitted to inspire and invigorate. The greatest Christian work of the time was St. Augustine's "City of God." The key-note of it is that Christianity does not care two cents what happens in "the city of men," or mere secular civilizations and culture: its sole concern is to make and keep men citizens of the "city of God," to teach them to subdue their sensuous feelings and preserve their virtue. That was true Christianity. It is quite absurd to affect to find artistic inspiration in it.

THE AGE OF FAITH AND UGLINESS

Then, in the fifth century, there occurred the mighty catastrophe, the fall of the Roman Empire, which distorted the whole course of human development. The older Christian apologists almost completely forgot this dislocation of civilization. They asked us to believe that the world became more virtuous, refined, and cultivated after the triumph of Christianity. Now that the historical facts are widely known, the new apologists use the catastrophe to lighten the responsibility of their religion. How, they ask us, could you expect the new religion *in such circumstances* to make the world more virtuous, more refined or more cultivated?

I take this triumph of barbarism fully into account and try to ascertain what Christianity might reasonably be expected to do and did not do. We will now make every allowance for it in connection with Christian art. Even the mediocre Christian art of the fourth century degenerated. For five further centuries Europe remained, with the exception of one area, a drab, sordid, ugly mass of semi-barbarism.

The one exception was the district of Ravenna in north Italy, and it is interesting. When Rome fell, Ravenna was chosen as a residence by the emperor, and later it came into the possession of the Greek emperors. Its position on the coast of the Adriatic—it was the predecessor of Venice as a seaport—made it very suitable for communication with Constantinople. And the art of Ravenna, which is the only art to be taken into account before the tenth century, is Greek or Byzantine art. In fact, the early art of Venice itself, the magnificent church of St. Mark, is Byzantine.

The impartial historian of art will therefore turn to the eastern half of Christendom in order to follow the undisturbed relations of art and Christianity. The rulers of the eastern empire were all

Christians from Constantine, its founder, onward. Rival religions were early and thoroughly extinguished. Streams of gold flowed into the veins of the Church, and the Greek Empire was practically untouched by the barbaric invasions. Here we should find an almost pure illustration of the artistic inspiration of the Christian religion.

But the Catholic historian of art, F. von Reber, at once warns us not to expect much:

> From the union of Roman enervation with Oriental languor nothing could be born but the long decrepitude of Byzantine Christianity —the trunk was too rotten and the graft too degenerate to bring forth a fair fruit. The evil qualities of Oriental society are evident throughout: luxury, despotism, a superstitious religion, and a slavish obedience to temporal powers.

Reber frankly acknowledges that early Christianity was anti-artistic, and he therefore does not for a moment expect the Church to vivify and invigorate this enervated world. The feat would by no means have been impossible if Christianity had been really a civilizing force, which Augustine never claimed it to be. Ancient Egypt twice fell into a similar state of decrepitude, and was twice rejuvenated and suffused with energy and artistic creativeness. Ancient Persia was restored, and had a splendid art and culture, at the very time of this failure of the Greek Empire which Reber describes. There was, it is true, a short period of Byzantine energy under the Emperor Justinian, when the church of St. Sophia (now a mosque) at Constantinople was built, but it soon passed, and the prosperous and almost untroubled empire remained artistically feeble, or actually degenerated.

Byzantine art at its best, as seen in its finest products, St. Sophia and St. Mark, is an illustration of the way in which the leaders of the Church were constantly persuaded to betray the principles of Christ and enlist the service of art. As Faure sincerely says (ii, 262):

> Had Christianity remained as St. Paul desired it, and as the Fathers of the Church defined it, it must needs have turned its back upon the plastic interpretations of the ideas which it introduced. But as it wished to live, it obeyed the law which compels us to give to our emotions the form of the things that we see.

The Christian ideas, in other words, would of themselves fail to hold the mass of the people in any age. The Church replies that it may and must, therefore, consult the spiritual feebleness of human nature by expressing these ideas in architecture, sculpture, painting, embroidery and music. Very well; but it is an historical truth that neither Christ nor St. Paul nor any weighty Father of the early Church admitted this, and it is a psychological truth that it is the pleasure of the art, not its idea-content, which attracts. So clear was this even in the Greek Empire that there soon arose the

sect of the Iconoclasts (image-breakers) who, in sincere fidelity to the principles of Christ, checked the new service of art for several centuries.

Thus the first notable Christian art, the Byzantine, arose from worldly considerations, and it had so little vital inspiration from religion that it soon degenerated into a mechanical, if technically excellent, imitation of early models, a lifeless and conventional and often grotesque presentment of divine-human subjects which was neither divine nor human. It is the real source of those elongated, stiff, unanatomical, bloodless saints and Christs, often beautifully painted or carved, which you see in the illuminated missals, the altar panels, the crucifixes of the early Middle Ages. Reber's verdict is (p. 99):

> The last traces of antique art were lost in soulless imitation of imitations: artistic work became from age to age more mechanical and more unreal, losing all appreciation and even pretense of beauty, which quality, in as far as the human body was concerned, was held by the ascetic tenets of the Christian Church not only in disesteem, but in positive condemnation.

Let us note in particular the service of the monks. It is nauseous to read in one history after another the conventional reference to the "magnificent service" of the monks to art and culture. A religion that makes a desert of a civilized world and then boasts of creating a few oases in it is not entitled to such flattery; and the overwhelming majority of the monks—of whom there were millions from the fifth to the twelfth century—did nothing for either art or culture or virtue. A few monasteries spent part of their time in sacred art, and, where the monks were really austere and sincere, the forms they painted or carved or wrought in mosaic, often with exquisite technique, were as far removed from reality and truth as were their religious ideas. It was the wicked monks and bishops who encouraged and treasured real art, when their taste rose above the coarsest sensual level.

Glance, on the other hand, at Persia. The ancient kingdom which had inherited all the art and culture of Babylon and Assyria, had soon declined and suffered several centuries of the kind of demoralization which occurred in Europe. But the Sassanid kings had raised it to as great a height of vigor and elegance as it had previously attained, and, while the Greek Empire was degenerating under the Christian religion, the Persian civilization was rising.

In the year 636 A. D. it fell to the Arabs. Here we have an even closer and more instructive parallel. The Arabs were at the time as barbaric as the Goths and Vandals who overthrew the Roman Empire, and their Mohammedan religion so sternly forbade the representation of animal or human forms that their rude inappreciation of art was converted, in large part, into a positive hatred. Yet within a hundred years Persia was raised again, for the

second time, to its old level, and the new Arabian-Persian culture became the most famous in the world. It is, at least in a general way, known to everybody by the high civilization of the Saracens, who taught the European Christian knights more than one lesson in refinement, and by its Spanish outgrowth, the culture of the Moors, which was to play an important part in the recivilizing of Europe.

Many writers on history and art seem to lose the historic sense whenever they have occasion to mention the successes or the failures of Christianity. It is convenient for them to forget the historical parallels which are usually employed to elucidate any phase of human development. The parallels I have just noticed show that neither the decadence of Greco-Roman art nor the languor of the "enervated" east (which was for millennia the most vigorous and progressive part of the earth) nor the rudeness of the northern barbarians suffices to explain the failure of Byzantine art or the infinitely worse failure of Christian art in Europe. It is not enough to remind us, as every historian of art does, of the continued demoralization and the incessant invasions from the north of Europe. Arab-Persian art represents just such a combination of enfeebled civilization, barbaric strength, and anti-artistic religion. But a great art was developed, and it was developed, not under the inspiration of the Mohammedan or any other religion, but precisely in defiance of the strict precepts of the religion. When art does at last develop in Europe, we shall find that it similarly derives from quite other sources than religion.

The Moorish art of Spain may in the meantime yield us another lesson of importance. The man who visits the wonderful mosque at Cordova, built mainly during the very darkest of the Dark Ages of Europe—the ninth and tenth centuries—may be tempted to reflect how here again religion has inspired art. But let him read the story of Cordova in those days, and he will realize that this surviving structure was only one of a vast number of beautiful and generally secular buildings. Let him visit the Alcazar at Seville (built by Moorish artists) and the Alhambra at Granada, and, if he be logical, he will now say that royalism was just as inspiring as religion. Neither was inspiring. Both *employed* the artist. His art was a native human impulse which he expended in the beautification of every instrument and aspect of Moorish life. The mosque and the city-gate, the copy of the Koran and the copy of some lascivious Arab poem, were equally beautiful.

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS

Our art-authorities are generally agreed on what I have said up to the present. One had a little more appreciation of fourth-century art than another: one is less disdainful than another of Byzantine art. But they agree that Europe was so generally squalid from the

fifth to the tenth century that a description of the period as an age of faith and ugliness is a broadly correct description. I qualify the statement only lest it may be thought that I have forgotten the patiently and often delicately worked miniatures and carvings, on debased models, which came from many of the monasteries. These are not great art but patient and skilful craftsmanship.

The first half of my thesis, therefore, can hardly be disputed; and there is the same general agreement about the second half. Here, however, we need to find our way more cautiously. The name and personalities of the artists begin to be known to us, and since they are often religious men (Raphael, Michelangelo, etc.), it may seem a nice task to attempt to dissociate their artistic inspiration from their religious convictions and sentiments. We shall find guiding principles in this matter, but it is well to take first a general view. And the general view of the art of the later Middle Ages which we find in all the historians is that, taken as a whole, it was due, not to religion, but to secular or economic conditions.

I have spoken of the Romanesque architecture which opens this period of great art. Luebke, the least anti-clerical of the authorities, remarks (i, 515) that "it attained a higher development just in proportion as it withdrew from the narrowing influence of monasteries." He adds:

> This new spirit, this free movement, is distinctly evident in the various branches of culture. Its dimly discerned but eagerly sought goal was the freeing of the individual from the rule of the priesthood, though only in the limited degree consistent with the religious ideas of the Middle Ages.

The qualifying words at the close of this paragraph are incongruous, because in the Middle Ages all revolt against "the rule of the priesthood," in any department of life, was heresy. Reber agrees when he gives us the characteristic of the age as "the removal of higher culture from the cell of the monk to the forum of everyday life." More fully he describes what happened in these words (p. 481):

> New political and social relations so entirely altered the character of occidental civilization that its products were essentially different. The results of the Crusades certainly did not correspond to the sacrifices which they had required, but they, nevertheless, like a thunderstorm, cleared the heavy and sultry air which had hung over Europe during the later Romanic period. Art was taken by the laity from the hands of the clergy and the monkish communities, and was freed from dogmatic traditions. In poetry, sculpture, and painting, the study of nature was cultivated, and in architecture a greater independence and originality soon made itself felt.

But the more recent and more vivid work of Faure, which studies the human spirit in artistic development as much as, or more than, the technical variations, gives us the vital truth (ii, 284):

> The church of the clergy was too narrow and too dark, the crowd that was rising with the sound of a sea begged for a church of its own; it felt in itself the courage and the knowledge necessary to build that church to its own stature. Its desire was to have the whole great work of building pass, with the material and moral life, from the hands of the cloistered monk into those of the living people.

The effect of this was, he says in a line: "Christianity, which until then had dominated life, was dominated by it and carried along in the movement."

Under the auspices of these three manuals, the most weighty that the English-speaking reader can consult, I approach the remainder of my task with confidence. The great art of the Middle Ages began with its removal from clerical and monastic to lay hands. It pleases Catholics, who, if they know anything about history, refrain from mentioning the earlier Middle Ages, to call the thirteenth century "the great Catholic century." It ought really, in comparison with the preceding centuries, to be called "the age of heresy." It opened with the awful massacre of the Albigensians, and it set the Inquisition to discover and intimidate heresy everywhere; yet even at its close, as Dante tells us about Florence, heresy was very bold and rampant. Even on the wings of Christendom, in England and Bohemia, this spirit so affected the minds of men that presently the heresy of Wyclif and Hus would sweep the countries.

All these things—the Scholastic movement (a restricted revival of intellectual life in Christendom), the rise of secular schools and teachers and new secular literature, the foundation of republics or democracies, the wide rebellion against clerical control in art and thought—are vitally interconnected. They betoken a new spirit in Europe, and it is, in the strict sense of the word, anti-Christian. It is an assertion of the rights of human nature: of the flesh and of the intellect. Modern apologists actually describe the teaching of the Albigensians and the Cathari as "anti-social" because they urged celibacy and voluntary poverty, as Christ had done! It means that Christendom was deserting Christ, and the hounds of the Inquisition had to be let loose, largely upon those who clung to Christ.

The "economic interpretation of history," which is the most solid and satisfying of interpretations, has never yet been fully and frankly applied to this wonderful age, and it cannot be expected in a short chapter like this, but I must give a few indications. The invasions of robust and semi-barbaric peoples from the north were over. Danes and Vikings had retired to their homes. Normans or Norsemen had settled in new lands. The nations of modern Europe had taken shape. Industry, commerce, and wealth emerge of themselves in such conditions, and of themselves they lead to artistic and intellectual activity.

In my "Peter Abelard" I have minutely studied and described the intellectual stirring of the first half of the twelfth century: the

network of busy provincial schools, the old monastic and episcopal schools at Paris becoming a university, the crowd of independent teachers and their pupils from all parts forming the new Latin Quarter on the banks of the Seine. It is all, plainly, an outgrowth of the new economic conditions. The Church on the whole keeps control of it, but obviously did not inspire it. It is the dawn of the kingdom of man: the real beginning of modern times long before the Renaissance proper.

While this largely meant an internal economic and political development in Europe, it is a profound and very common error to overlook the impulse given from without, especially by the Spanish Moors. Abelard, when he was bayed at on every side by the narrow-minded monks, thought of going to live in learned and tolerant Spain. What brilliant lessons the Moors could give Europe! Here let us note, gratefully, that the great intermediaries, the broadcasters of their culture, were the Jews. Christendom has never yet realized how much it owes to the Jews whom it so vilely treated. In a less degree the Mohammedans influenced Europe by contact with the Crusaders in Palestine; though knights were then, as a rule, too boorish to take lessons in culture. And there was repeatedly an importation of art, even if cramped and degenerate, from the Greek world.

It was a repetition of the story of the Greeks. They had come down from the north, semi-barbarians, with their family of gods and goddesses. They at last displayed a unique and superb art in making temples for Zeus and Athene and the other deities, and carving statues of them. But no one imagines that the religion was the essential inspiration of the art. It merely provided themes. The Greeks had come into contact with the older civilizations, and they made a civilization of their own; just as America has created a civilization of its own and would create an art of its own.

This must suffice to indicate, very sketchily, how and why Europe begot a new spirit in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; not a new religion, not even a new appreciation of its old religion —rather the contrary—but a new, soaring, ambitious human spirit. There is an interesting theory amongst architects (developed in Leader Scott's "Cathedral Builders"), though it is warmly disputed, that the old Roman architects took shelter in the region of Como during the barbaric invasions, and kept up their traditions there until Europe was comparatively settled and there was a call for their work. It is said to have been the descendants of these "free masons" who wrought the new architecture of Europe; evolved the Romanesque out of the Roman, and the Gothic out of the Romanesque. I have proved elsewhere that the Roman trade unions, or Colleges of the workers, certainly survived into the Middle Ages and were the forerunners of the Guilds.

At all events it is universally admitted that the great age of

cathedral building opened with the transfer of the art from the monks to laymen, to real artists unfettered by ascetic traditions. Large and rich towns were now growing all over Europe, and the burghers wanted fine churches. Dreamy religious writers love to imagine that the art became great because of the theme. They were to build a "house of God." It was a religious inspiration. But they were just as "inspired" when they planned the civic buildings of the new burghers. It is the same inspiration in the Clothiers' Hall at Ypres, the Town Hall at Louvain, the Rathaus at Cologne, as in the cathedrals of Rheims and Amiens. Give the artist a theme and he works it out appropriately; but the theme does not create his art.

You see this very plainly in the range or, so to say, output of the new architects. We are not concerned here with technical questions, and need note only that, according to all the modern authorities, the Gothic was developed quite naturally and laboriously out of the Roman through the Romanesque. All sorts of fanciful theories of the origin of the Gothic have been published, and the ordinary person, who knows it only in its finest specimens, the greater cathedrals, is apt to imagine it as a sort of revelation or miracle of religious inspiration. It was evolved as prosaically as the automobile. A northern climate demanded a different type of architecture from the south; just as you want a different type of house in Minnesota and in southern Florida. They wanted more light or larger windows, sloping roofs to ease the masses of winter snow, and so on. In sheer mutual rivalry they raised their churches higher and higher, until the strain on the walls became serious, and the flying buttress was invented.

In short, modern architects trace the whole gradual development from the eleventh to the fourteenth century; though, while the earlier or Romanesque style was developed in Saxony, the Gothic was elaborated first in the region of Paris. The Rheims cathedral is generally admitted to have been its most perfect example, and has been called "the Parthenon of the Middle Ages." Reber, who also regards it as the finest cathedral, says, nevertheless, that it does not compare with the work of the Greeks. "It is," he says, "not of that absolute perfection which characterizes the work of Iktinos and Phidias," the builders of the Parthenon. Its sculptures, which are so much admired, are, he says, "by no means entirely free from inequalities in composition, from errors of proportion, and from exaggerations of facial expressions." By the end of the thirteenth century the Gothic architecture became too elaborate and degenerated. The whole story is one of art, not religion.

The entire story of this great medieval architecture is a normal artistic episode. As the towns grow richer and the civic life more important, the architects are ordered to build Guild Halls, Town

Halls and so on. These, where the money is available, are just as beautiful as the cathedrals. And the inspiration droops and fades just like the inspiration in any other golden age of art. The religion remained just the same. Indeed, after the appalling slaughter of heretics in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, I should be inclined to say that Europe was more Christian at the end of the great Gothic period than at its height.

But the movement followed the ordinary laws of art. The genius drooped. The new generation was content to imitate and was apt to be too elaborate. And when the Reformation came, when men really went back to the spirit and letter of Christ's message, art was frozen as far as this really religious influence reached. If a Catholic asks you why we cannot build these glorious cathedrals today, or can only feebly imitate them, ask him why the great Gothic period exhausted itself long before the Reformation.

THE PAINTERS OF THE RENAISSANCE

The men of the earlier Middle Ages had certainly bad blood in their veins individually, but there had been no social veins, if I may use the term, with a vigorous collective circulation. It was when this social circulation and social wealth began that the bourgeoisie demanded art, and an art nearer to their own mood. Sculpture followed architecture into the hands of the laity. The saints and saintesses, even the devils and angels and Christ and Mary, became human. A little of the human joy of the more prosperous age was reflected on their features. Human models were used for them, and busts and limbs were rounded. Humanity was breathed into the older sculpture, and it began to rise toward the ancient Greek level. Perhaps some would say that in the sculpture of Michelangelo it reached that level. I do not know. But most experts say not; and it is significant that while joy in the real human form made medieval sculpture great, the Greek statuary was even greater, because it found its inspiration in the *nude* human form, in beautiful courtesans and athletic youths.

And this, according to all the authorities—and it will occur to any thoughtful person—is the clue to medieval painting. It is not really medieval at all. Luebke, one of the chief authorities, includes the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in his section in "Modern Art." The result is that of medieval painters he can mention only Cimabue, Giotto and two or three others, who either clung to the old conventional models or began the revolt against them. They are, he says, "the heralds who announce the dawn of a new day." But the new day, with all the great painters whose names are familiar to everybody, belongs to modern times. I have called them the painters of the Renaissance, and this again reminds us that they flourished in the least religious part of the Middle Ages.

The very date will be convincing to every reader who knows a little about history, but let me again quote the leading authorities to show that in slighting earlier painting and claiming that humanization made it great I am saying nothing new or disputable. Luebke, who makes all the great painters moderns, says: "During the Middle Ages the creations of art had been very largely controlled by traditional—chiefly ecclesiastical—habits of thought."

Woltmann and Woermann, perhaps the leading authorities on the history of painting in particular, say curtly in their "History of Painting" that up to the middle of the thirteenth century painting and sculpture in Europe were "the painting and sculpture of children," that after the thirteenth century painting "emancipated itself from priestly dictation," and that it was in the least Christian and most immoral period of Italy that "the highest beauty, which the gods themselves had, two thousand years before, revealed to the Greeks, now revisited earth among the Italians." Could there be a more scathing comment on the Roman Catholic claim than this plain statement of fact of two of the highest authorities on the subject?

Dr. von Reber entirely agrees, and the highest authority on the period, J. Addington Symonds, is just as emphatic in his monumental work, "The Renaissance in Italy." "Painting in the earlier period," he says, "suffered from a barren scholasticism." It consisted of "frigid reproductions of lifeless forms, copied technically, and without inspiration, from debased patterns." The next step was that the artist "humanized the altar-pieces and cloister frescoes," and "piety, at the lure of art, folded her soaring wings, and rested on the genial earth." So say all the authorities, while petty controversialists and pious writers would have you believe that it was art which soared at the lure of piety. In fine, confronting the great art of Raphael and Michelangelo, both Christians giving superb or exquisite form to Christian ideas, Symonds still ascribes their inspiration to their humanity, not their religion: "For the painters of the full Renaissance Roman martyrs and Olympian deities were alike burghers of one spiritual city, the city of the beautiful and the human."

The general development is clear and familiar. Painting remained stiff and unnatural long after architecture and sculpture, because, says Reber, "its dependence upon the libraries and schools of the convents was much longer continued than was that of architecture and sculpture." The revolt—the approach to nature and life—began with Cimabue, who, being a pioneer, did not lead it far. It was his pupil, Giotto, the founder of the Florentine School, who first, about the end of the thirteenth century, boldly "substituted his own observation of nature for outworn forms." If he had to paint a St. Joseph or a St. Peter, in other words, he did not look up the conventional figures in illuminated missals or altar-panels,

but brought to his studio a burly Florentine carpenter or fisherman.

So the new note was struck, and it slowly reverberated through Italy. Florence now afforded the material conditions of art: wealth, sensuality, and a wholesome skepticism. Other Italian cities overtook it, and had their schools of painters. In the fifteenth century Constantinople fell to the Turks, and hosts of Greek artists fled to Italy. The Renaissance—the Rebirth of classic art as well as literature—set in, and enforced the humanizing movement. Most of Europe was successively lit up, and a great literature or a great art appeared in many countries.

Pictures for the new beautiful churches, for popes and bishops and abbeys, were the most in demand and the most profitable, so that the painters of the earlier period have chiefly occupied themselves with sacred subjects. The artists did not paint a Virgin-and-Child, a Nativity, a St. Lawrence, because they felt a religious urge or inspiration in them, but because they were commissioned to paint them. The life of each of the great artists of the time is a series of journeys to execute commissions. If a secular ruler, a cardinal, or a pope wanted his portrait painted, the inspiration was just the same.

The only point that any informed person can seriously raise about the relation of these artistic geniuses to religion, apart from the obvious fact that religion *employed* them, is to what extent in certain individual artists the Christian faith increased or enhanced the inspiration. Small as a restricted claim like this would be—relatively to the foolish common boast that "Christianity inspired medieval art"—no authority on art would admit that Raphael or Michelangelo would have done less princely work if the fashion of painting or carving sacred subjects had passed and they were confined to mythology and life and history. The painters of the Renaissance who did actually paint mythological scenes and contemporary life painted to the height of their faculty just as the religious painters did. Even Fra Angelico, being an artist of genius, would have put as much inspiration into the painting of the improper frescoes on the walls of certain houses in Pompeii, had that been his task, as he actually infused into the pious frescoes in the walls of his monastery.

The period, the whole complexus of circumstances which I have described, evoked a succession of great artists, and they painted what their clients wanted. The same artists painted what are called obscene and what are called sincerely religious pictures. Fra Filippo Lippi, the renegade monk, did a very large number of beautiful paintings on the walls of churches. Why not? He merely, says Luebke, "placed sacred images and events on the footing of everyday life." He could, as well as any, give his saint the ecstatic expression or give his Christ the proper air of majesty. Botticelli,

whose religious pictures are famous, painted pagan myths and allegories no less beautifully. Pinturicchio, notoriously immoral and skeptical, has left a superb fresco in the Vatican of Pope Alexander VI (as immoral as himself) worshiping the risen Savior with an expression of piety that could hardly be surpassed. And on another wall of the Vatican there used to be a most tender and devout representation of the Virgin Mary which was a portrait of the damsel who at the time was the Pope's mistress, wantoning with him in the Vatican every night.

The Roman School of painting—of painters who were not Romans—was one of the latest. The center of Christendom, as I said, had no great art until it became semi-pagan. It was a series of Popes, who, when they were not themselves immoral, surrounded themselves with utterly corrupt courts, who "inspired" the great art of Rome; and the funds for the work were derived from the most unscrupulous exploitation of the superstitions of Europe. It was under these immoral Popes, in an atmosphere of unbounded license and semi-pagan ideas, that Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Perugino, Pinturicchio, Raphael, and Michelangelo worked. Without that atmosphere Rome would never have become the museum of art that it is. Aphrodite, Apollo, and Dionysos had more share than Christian ideas in the production.

CHAPTER XXV

The Moorish Civilization in Spain

The Crescent and the Cross—The Brilliance of the Moors—The City of Light and Love—Moorish Science and Literature—The Ministry of the Jew

The Crescent and the Cross

THE phrase which, like all historical writers, I have repeatedly used for the most degraded period of Christendom, the Dark Ages, applies especially to the tenth century. Europe had then been "Christendom" for five or six centuries. Nearly six hundred years had elapsed since popes and bishops had directed the hands of ignorant emperors to sign the doom of every rival source of inspiration, to close schools as well as temples, to proscribe art as well as literature. The avalanche of uncivilized Teutons from the north had ceased. Only the western coast of Europe now suffered from the seafaring Norsemen.

But we saw what Christendom was. Except where the conventional but sustained art of the Greeks alleviated its squalor, as in Venice, the continent was a picture of economic, social, moral and intellectual desolation. It was the hour of blackest degradation of the Papacy. It was the time when the lasciviousness of bishops, priests, monks and nuns did not even wear the cloak of hypocrisy. It was an age when a modest modern millionaire could have bought a kingdom; when ninety-nine percent of the people were serfs with as intolerable a lot as slaves ever had; when not one man in one hundred, or one woman in one thousand, could read; when the weaker were trodden into the mud and blood, and even the strong winced before the ghastly plagues, the ever-flashing knife, the comet in the heavens, the legions of imaginary devils in the air.

"If you seek his monument, look around you," says an inscription in a great cathedral (London), referring to the architect. If you want to know the social inspiration of Christianity, study the tenth century. No seductive phrase of the preacher, no lie of the apologist, no diplomatic concession of the historian, can conceal from a thoughtful mind the stark responsibility of the Church, especially of the Papacy, for that unparalleled degradation of a civilization. It is one of the saddest chapters of the martyrdom of man, one of the sternest counts in the indictment of God. Paul and

Augustine had triumphed—in part. They had certainly shattered the City of Man. But whether this that they had created might without humor be called the City of God . . . .

They had triumphed in all Europe except one corner: the Iberian peninsula, which we now call Spain and Portugal. From that land the cross of Christ was removed at the beginning of the eighth century. The Mohammedans ruled it. Indeed, the embroidered banners of the Moor, blazing with texts of the Koran, were borne triumphantly across the Pyrenees, glittered in the sun of Provence, and reached Lyons and the towns of Burgundy. Christendom was "threatened." And the innocent teachers in our high schools still tell innocent children, from not very innocent manuals of history, how the glorious Charles Martel, of blessed memory, met the Moors on the plains of France and saved the world—from civilization.

For there is not a teacher in any university or school in the world who dares tell his pupils that, as every historian knows, the banners of the "Saracens" stood for one of the most progressive civilizations in the world; that Charles Martel and his army were vandals, hoboes, semi-civilized barbarians; and that if the Moors had succeeded in conquering Europe, and it had two centuries later received everywhere the civilization which the Moors set up in Spain, we should today, in every part of the world, be at least five centuries more advanced than we are. No man can count the cost, in blood and tears and poverty and injustice, of that victory of Charles Martel on the plains between Tours and Poitiers.

You may have wondered that an account of the Moorish civilization in Spain should be included in a study of religion. You will very quickly cease to wonder. It yields two lessons of vital importance. First, that it is sheer bunk to say that any country in Europe could not be restored more quickly to civilization because the Roman régime had been trodden under foot by the northern barbarians. Secondly, that the real impulses to the restoration of civilization in Europe had no connection with the Christian religion and were largely antagonistic to it.

A few years ago I stood on the bridge at Cordova and contemplated the melancholy spectacle. Some guide-book assured me that Cordova was "a vivacious over-grown village," which I could only take to be a reference to its goats and asses. Gautier, who once stood where I was standing, imagined it as the "whitened skeleton" of a once beautiful maid; but I could not find the whiteness. Garbage-laden bullocks and impoverished Spaniards wander along its narrow dirty streets; which were paved in the ninth century and have never since been mended, says one ironic writer. Its river-edges are ragged and squalid. Less than a hundred thousand people struggle for life in its decaying frame. Yet a thousand years ago it was the greatest city on earth, with near a million prosperous and happy

people in it, with a wealth that could have bought up the whole of European Christendom many times, with miles of glorious marble mansions shining out of superb gardens along that river-front, with art and learning that drew men from every part of the world where art and learning were still appreciated.

Spain, like Britain, Gaul, South Germany, Italy and North Africa, had been civilized by the Romans. Those uninspired, materialistic, sensual, immoral Romans had made of its primitive inhabitants a happy cultured folk immeasurably higher than any section of Christendom was a thousand years later. You still tread their roads and cross their bridges in Spain.

And this Roman-Spanish civilization had been trodden under foot—I use the stereotyped phrase—by the Teutonic tribes as heavily as Gaul, and more heavily than Italy. The Vandals had thundered over it. The Visigoths had dominated it and settled it.

In fact, even in this early stage of its history Spain teaches us to distrust the conventions, or the religious concessions, of history. A very promising Visigothic civilization was established. The people were prosperous; the rulers extraordinarily wealthy and luxurious; the administration of justice one of the best in the world. But, says Scott, the leading authority, "no nation has ever flourished under the rule of a hierarchy," and "the piety of the priesthood had been supplanted by an insatiable thirst for temporal power" (i, 263). Stanley Lane-Poole has to admit the same situation in his "Moors in Spain" (p. 7):

> The Goths remained devout, indeed, but they regarded their acts of religion chiefly as reparation for their vices. . . . They were quite as corrupt and immoral as the Roman nobles who had preceded them. . . . The very clergy, who preached about the brotherhood of Christians, now that they had become rich and owned great estates, joined in the traditional policy and treated their slaves and serfs as badly as any Roman noble.

These are pictures of Spain in the seventh and eighth centuries. You see the moral. The Visigoths, when they had settled in Spain in the fifth century, had at once shown that the barbaric strength of the Teutons grafted on the culture of the Romans *could* beget a new civilization. That refutes (as Theodoric did in Italy also) the first part of the conventional statement—that it must take ages for Christianity to civilize the barbarians. Then, within two centuries, the Visigoths and their Church degenerated together to the level of vice and violence and ignorance of the rest of Europe; which refutes the second part of the statement—that Christianity was a civilizing force.

Now let us see whence the real civilizing forces came. Arabia had never yet been conquered and civilized when, in the early years of the seventh century, Mohammed fired it with his new religion. This religion was not a civilizing force—no religion is or ever has

been—but it put a marvelous energy into the Arabs, and they set out to conquer and convert the world. Within a very short time they overran the old civilizations of Persia and Egypt, and they did not take long to evolve a brilliant Arab-Persian civilization. As Scott says: "Less than one hundred years intervened between the vagabondage and ignorance of the desert and the stability and intellectual culture of the great Abbaside and Ommeyade capitals." Here is lesson number two: still clearer than the lesson taught us by the Visigoths and Ostrogoths. The Arabs were as rude and uncultivated as the Teutons, but, when they overran an older civilization, they became fully civilized within a century. And Scott, although he does not see the force of the point, gives ample evidence of the reason. *The faith in Islam rapidly decayed.* Damascus, the new capital, was saturated with skepticism and resounded with blasphemy. The religion did not inspire civilization, but the neglect of its precepts permitted human nature to civilize itself.

We shall now see how far this applies to the Moors, but we have first to see how these Mohammedan Arabs, or "Saracens" (which means "Easterners"), became "Moors" and entered Europe.

From Egypt, the Arabs, still thirsting for conquest, again looked westward. The desert upon which they gazed had no terrors for the children of Arabia, whereas the sea repelled them. Beyond the desert, they heard, was a fruitful and prosperous land (now Tunisia, Algiers and Morocco) which Carthaginians and Romans had made rich. So one day in the year 647, an Arab general and twenty thousand men on horses and camels plunged into the unknown, and they swept the thousand-mile strip of territory on the north coast of Africa. Within about half a century the Arabs dominated the whole southern shore of the Mediterranean and looked covetously to the rich lands of its northern shore.

Some of them were settled amongst the Moors ("Blacks"—though the Berbers of Morocco are merely swarthy whites, not blacks) opposite Gibraltar, and no doubt they intermarried with them, so to Europeans they became known as the "Moors." On the European coast the formidable fortress of Cluta checked their ambition. It was held by a Greek officer, Count Julian, nominally for the Greek emperor. But in 709 or 710 Count Julian became an ally of the Moors. The story runs that he sent his daughter to the corrupt Visigothic court and there she was ravished by the king. Julian, in revenge, invited the Moorish governor to cross and take Spain. He painted the colossal wealth of the Visigothic court and Church in glowing colors and he pointed out that the degeneracy of the country would permit a small force to conquer it.

In the year 710, after a reconnoitering expedition, a Berber general was sent over with seven thousand men (to whom later were

added five thousand Berber cavalry), and before the end of 711 almost the whole peninsula was in the hands of the Moors. The remnants of the Visigothic army, nobles and clergy were penned up in a small mountainous district on the Bay of Biscay. The Moors ascended the Pyrenees and built a chain of watch-towers on the mountains to protect themselves against the (to them) strange people of Gaul.

In time, as I have already said, they invaded Gaul. The reports of the vast wealth found in Spain and the prosperity of the country brought increasing numbers of Arabs from the east. A viceroy and four hundred select Arab nobles were sent from Damascus. The thirst for conquest was renewed, and at one time a hundred thousand Moorish troops were scouring France. By this time they were highly civilized, and the people of the south of France welcomed them as new Romans in comparison with the brutal Franks and Germans of the north.

Over their failure to advance further in Europe, and what that failure (represented in most schools as a victory for Christianity and *civilization*) meant to Europe, we must not linger. We have to see how in Spain itself they developed a policy which makes the rest of Europe look like savagery. But note, before we pass on, that the brilliance and refinement of the Moors made a lasting impression on the people of southern France, and for centuries these people remained culturally in contact with the Moors. The passes of the Pyrenees were the real source of the first inspiration of barbaric Europe; and the south of France soon became the most prosperous and most skeptical or heretical region in Europe. It is not merely the warm sun that has made Provence the proverbial land of song and gaiety.

Let us turn back to Spain. Representatives of an already civilized race and acting under constant instructions from the Khalif of Damascus, the Moorish governors at once took over and remodeled the civic and political administration and the agricultural system. There was, they found, no exaggeration of the amount of the royal and clerical treasures. Toledo, the Visigoth capital, yielded an incredible amount of gold and jewels; though it is believed that great treasures are still hidden underground, where the fleeing priests buried them, and the earliest fugitives (including the bishop) had taken much with them. It is related that Moorish soldiers overtook a group of clerical fugitives with a solid gold lectern, heavily encrusted with rubies, emeralds and pearls, worth half a million dollars in modern currency, though money was then worth ten times as much. But the basis of the Moorish civilization which was now developed in Spain was the solid economic life of the country itself.

THE BRILLIANCE OF THE MOORS

The splendors of Granada, the best known of the Moorish cities today, belong to a much later date, and I am taking the Moorish civilization as it existed about the middle of the tenth century. Europe generally was then at its lowest depth of degradation. Rome stank with corruption. Charlemagne's great effort to restore a large part of the continent had failed. France was ravaged by the Northmen and England by the Danes. The clergy in every country were generally corrupt, and cared not the toss of a coin for what we call civilization.

Spain, on the contrary, was one "highly cultivated and extraordinarily productive garden," with nine large cities, three thousand towns, and tens of thousands of villages. There were twelve hundred villages along the banks of the Guadalquivir alone. In one day's journey, the chroniclers say, you could, though there was no speeding in those days, pass through three cities and almost a continuous series of towns and prosperous villages. Cordova, the capital, must have had a population of about a million people. Seville at one time had five hundred thousand, Almeria five hundred thousand, Granada four hundred and twenty-five thousand, Malaga three hundred thousand, Valencia two hundred and fifty thousand, and Toledo two hundred thousand.

It is estimated that the total population in the middle of the tenth century was about thirty millions: a phenomenal increase of population, betokening of itself a very high degree of civilization. A population normally, with fair sanitation and hygienic conditions, doubles in a quarter of a century. It will tell you in a word what the Moors had done, and what the Spaniards afterwards *undid,* if you reflect that this Spanish population, which was thirty millions in the tenth century, is now only twenty-two millions. The figure of thirty millions in the tenth century is an extraordinary tribute to the science and wisdom of the Moors. England, for instance, had then a population of about two or three million people.

The prosperous and carefully fostered conditions of agriculture was the basis of the country's prosperity. People who have never been in Spain have a vague idea (largely derived from novels and films) that it is a land of fruitful soil, luscious vegetation, undying flowers, and unending song and love. Andalusia, the Moorish area —they cared little for the north—is proverbial for its bright eyes and amours, its roses and guitars. It is an undeserved reputation. I like the Spanish people as well as any among whom I have traveled, but gaiety is not their characteristic, nor is Andalusia a land of love and flowers and song. Spain today is miserably poor, priest-ridden, abominably governed. The country generally has, for most of the year, a scorched and thin carpet of vegetation, and the hard-working peasants wring a poor living from the soil. Irrigation will

one day, when Spain casts out its Royalty, its Church, and its Army, make a paradise of it once more, but today it is devoid of capital or enterprise.

A paradise, comparatively, it must have been in the tenth century to encourage such a growth of population. Men had the wit to assist nature. Aqueducts and canals distributed water where today the helpless peasants see the rains from the ubiquitous mountains race at once to the sea. The vast barren plains of today were well wooded, and bore golden crops for the Moors. The bleak sides of the hills were terraced and furnished with soil. In many places four different crops were raised from the same field in a year. Food was very abundant and cheap; and all the resources of the east were added to the resources of Roman Spain. The myrtle blended its perfume with that of the rose and the orange. The palm raised its graceful lines against the deep blue sky. It was a land of gardens, and such gardens as few countries know today.

Upon the groundwork of this rich primary production rose a very effective industrial and commercial system. I am not concerned with the details of this, and will only remind the reader how the steel blades of Toledo and the leather work of Cordova were the most treasured in the world, and how the Moorish mercantile fleet scoured the seas in search of luxuries and rarities for the hundreds of thousands of rich people. The Moors were the new Romans, attracting scholars and artists, slave-dealers and purveyors of dancing girls, silk-merchants and jewel-merchants, from every part of the earth.

The taxation was not oppressive. In the main it consisted of a tenth of the yield of crops and mines or of the profits of industry or commerce. But the revenue was astonishing. The Khalif of the time I am describing, Abd-al-Rahman III, is said to have had an annual income of more than $30,000,000; and money would then purchase many times more than it now does. Nobles and merchants were proportionately wealthy. We read of the Vizier of Abd-al-Rahman III making his monarch a present of an estate with forests of twenty thousand trees, sixty beautiful slaves, one hundred horses and mules, eight hundred magnificent suits of armor, and a million dollars' worth of gold and other valuables. The present is valued by the Arab writers, a very different lot from the ignorant monkish chroniclers of Europe, at about $5,000,000.

But, erotic and luxurious as the Moorish princes were, they used their vast resources for public and philanthropic purposes as few Christian monarchs ever did. The rulers who chiefly made the civilization of the Moors (from 756 to 961) were munificent patrons and friends of learned men, most generous and ardent supporters of education, and themselves in some cases no mean scholars. The Khalif Hakim II, at a time when few Christian monarchs could write their names, had a library of half a million books,

and was reputed to be familiar with them. Large numbers of schools were maintained by the Khalifs themselves.

Equally generous were they, both with their own and the State funds, in executing public works. The solid roads and bridges of the Romans were supervised, and where necessary repaired, so that the country had a system of communications worthy of its industry and commerce. The heavy motor vehicles of today rush, at Toledo and Cordova and elsewhere, over the magnificent bridges which the Romans built and the Moors restored. Aqueducts were repaired and new aqueducts built, so that abundant supplies of water were secured, not only for irrigation, but for distribution in the towns. A post service, with relays of fast horses, covered the main roads of the kingdom.

In order to appreciate these things one has to be reminded constantly of the contrast with the rest of Europe. Six hundred and more years later than this there would still be no drainage system in the largest cities of Europe. Foul and contaminated water trickled along, or lay in stagnant pools, on the unpaved streets of Paris and London centuries after the Renaissance had done its work. Yet the streets of the Moorish cities were paved, lighted, and finely drained by the middle of the tenth century. Scott says that some of the sewers under the streets of Valencia could take an automobile, and the smallest of them would permit an ass. The streets were also well policed.

This excellent sanitation was supported by a general cleanliness which the modern American will take for granted, but it was then a marvel of refinement in Europe. Cordova alone had nine hundred public baths, and private baths were everywhere; at a time when there was probably not a bath in the whole of the rest of Europe. The ways of the feudal nobility of Christendom were then of a coarseness that one must hesitate to describe. Clean linen was unknown, until the fashion of wearing linen was borrowed from the Mohammedans. Carpets were not manufactured. Straw covered the floors of the castles of the nobility and the lecture-rooms of the schools, and dogs and humans made it inexpressibly filthy. No one had a pocket handkerchief . . . . Gardens also were generally beyond the imagination of Christendom, but in a Moorish Spain the utmost care and expense were devoted by all classes to their beautiful and perfumed gardens. Fountains sparkled in the sun everywhere, in the courts of private houses and in the palaces and public places. Two immense and beautiful marble basins still decorate the courtyard of the great mosque at Cordova, where every worshiper once washed before entering.

The administration of justice—presently to be replaced by the horrors of the Inquisition and its torture chambers—was, say the authorities, "untainted by even the suspicion of corruption." Education was better even than it had been in the Roman Empire; and

higher education was second only to that of Greece in its best days. Hospitals and orphanages were founded by the Khalifs themselves, as they had been founded by the Stoic emperors (and had since almost disappeared from Europe), and the nobles and merchants were not slow to follow the royal example in this fulfilment of the precepts of the Koran. The Khalifs themselves visited the sick and sought cases of distress to alleviate.

Women, reduced to subjection elsewhere in Europe on account of the absurd biblical story of Eve and the misogyny of the early Fathers, were free and honored amongst the Moors. The liberality, if not license, which had soon replaced the early fanaticism at Damascus, was sufficiently adopted in Spain to secure the position of woman. The harsh Mohammedan attitude toward her with which we are familiar was not assumed until a later date. Women at the Cordova court helped to shape the counsels of the Khalifs, were the friends of scholars and literary men, or were, if of a different temperament, easily able to pursue their amours with the artists and minstrels of the court. Education was freely extended to them, and many took a keen interest in the astronomy, philosophy, and medical science of the time. Women wore the veil in public, but they were respected, and in the home they were honored and esteemed.

Of refinement, courtesy, gentlemanliness, it is needless to speak, since it is the Moors who indelibly stamped upon the Spanish people that personal dignity and courtesy which still lends a peculiar attractiveness even to the artisan and the peasant. A far more important distinction of the Moors was their religious tolerance. In the beginning there had naturally been "martyrs"; though there was nothing to compare with the later Spanish butchery of the descendants of the Moors. But in the settled Moorish kingdom, apart from rebellious bodies like the Christians of Toledo, who constantly looked northward for deliverance, all religions were tolerated.

Jews and Christians paid a small special tax, and were granted the full protection of the laws. So numerous were they that the yield of the tax was high, and the Khalifs discouraged a proselytism that might reduce it. The Christians at Cordova were permitted to keep their cathedral, which was eventually bought from them at a very high price, and they were then permitted to build a number of churches. At Toledo they had six churches, and they maintained a friendly intercourse with their neighbors until priests stirred them to religious hatred. The Jews, who then enjoyed their real golden age, rose to high distinction in science and the State service under the Moors.

This general sketch of the Moorish civilization will receive more color and detail when we describe the life of Cordova and Granada. Already the reader will have amply perceived the extraor-

dinary superiority of this "pagan" civilization and what it must have meant to the life of semi-barbarous Europe. There is not in any single historian the least hesitation. They do not *compare* the Moors and the Christians. It would be like comparing Bostonians with the Eskimo. It is a question of sharp contrast. Stanley Lane-Poole says of the Spanish Christians who occupied the north of Spain (p. 119):

> The forays of the Christians were a terrible curse to their victims; they were rude, unlettered people, and few of them could even read; their manners were on a par with their education; and their fanaticism and cruelty were what might be expected from such uncouth barbarians.

Later he contrasts these representatives of medieval chivalry with the Moors (p. 189):

> The Christians of the north formed the most striking possible contrast to the Moorish rivals. The Arabs, rough tribesmen as they had been at their first arrival, had softened into a highly civilized people, delighting in poetry and elegant literature, devoted to the pursuit of learning, and, above all, determined to enjoy life to the utmost. Their intellectual tastes were unusually fine and delicate. . . . Music, oratory, as well as the severer pursuits of science, seemed to come naturally to this brilliant people; and they possessed in a high degree that quality of critical perception and delicate appreciation of the finer shades of expression which in the present day we associate with the French nation.
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> The Christians of the north were as unlike this as can well be conceived. They were rude and uncultivated. . . . They had no idea of the high standard of chivalrous conduct which poets afterwards infused into their histories. Their poverty made them any man's servants; they sold their valor to him who paid them best; they fought to get a livelihood.

He shows that the famous Cid, who still figures in uncritical literature as a flower of Christian chivalry, was "treacherous, cruel, a violator of altars and a breaker of his own good faith." He sold his sword and his passions to both Moslem and Christian.

Miss Charlotte Yonge, who had the courage to tell the truth about Moors and Christians fifty years ago, can find only one consolation to her faith. Islam, she says, reached its highest inspiration in the Moorish civilizations, and was then exhausted; but Christianity had "infinite possibilities in the future."

There is in this a double fallacy. The Moorish civilization was not inspired by Islam, and it did not die; and the progressive civilization of modern times is not Christian.

I must refer the reader to many pages of Scott's valuable work for the evidence that the Moors set up their high culture rather in defiance of the Koran. Their philanthropy was, it is true, directly enjoined by the Koran, though it had its chief source in refinement and chivalry. Their toleration of Jew and Christian again was, some may be surprised to know, based upon the Koran (as Miss

Yonge quotes one of their leaders as saying). But they were a very liberal and largely a skeptical race. Andalusia had miles of vineyards, though the Koran strictly forbade wine, and carved images and pictures are found in their palaces. Damascus, from which their culture was originally derived, was full of atheism and blasphemy within a hundred and fifty years of the death of Mohammed. This ridiculing of religion was, Scott says, distasteful to the "polished society" of the Moors, but "education and skepticism were almost equally diffused throughout the peninsula," and the Moors had no illusion about the divine origin of the Koran.

And now we begin to see that Christianity no more inspired the civilization of Europe than Islam inspired the civilization of the Moors. Christendom did not begin to be civilized until the eleventh or twelfth century. Even then its great art was associated with appallingly barbaric features of moral, social, and political life, and ninety-nine percent of its people remained ignorant. A very high proportion of this barbarity lasted until the nineteenth century, and the really high and progressive civilization of our own time has nothing to do with Christianity.

But the beginning of civilization in Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries has a great deal to do with the Moors. The light which blazed in Spain could not but penetrate into the darkness of Europe. The Christian Spaniards, who gradually overran the northern half of the country as the Moors became luxurious and confined themselves to Andalusia, could not remain entirely insensible to the refinement of their neighbors. Christian visitors to the Moorish cities took away thrilling stories of their splendor and learning. The Jews, especially, played an important part in diffusing the new culture.

THE CITY OF LIGHT AND LOVE

Today, eight and a half centuries after the Spaniards reëntered Toledo, a sluggish population of about thirty thousand people crawls about its drowsy streets, living largely on visitors. One thinks of the thousands of lizards which occupy the ruins of Pompeii. When the Spaniards rode proudly in, headed by their archbishop . . . . Well, civilization was kicked out. A superb cathedral was built later, but otherwise the city sank to the status of a large village. The fine bridge over the river was too solid, and too useful, to be destroyed. The wonderful city-gate, the Puerta del Sol, was spared, and today seems a melancholy monument of a great past brooding in a slum. For the rest, the wonderful old city might never have existed. You search diligently for a few fragments of the former grandeur. All was destroyed. And you wander disconsolately along the narrow main street, where the luxurious life of a quarter of a million people once glittered, in search of a

decent place of refreshment, and must at length eat in a dirty room amongst mule-drivers and farmers.

The glory of the Moors went south: to Seville, Cordova, Granada, Malaga, and Valencia. Toledo had been only an outpost. The sunny south was the natural home of the Moors. Cordova was their chief city; and it is singular how few people know, in spite of its recent date, that it rivaled Babylon and Rome and Bagdad in magnificence and importance.

I have said what a pitiable spectacle Cordova is today. I am not, in these constant laments, merely exciting, or attempting to excite, odium against the religion which inspired the Spaniards to destroy a great civilization. I am more alive to the loss to the human race than to the guilt of the culprits. Had Christendom built on and further developed the superb work done by the Greeks in the east, by the Romans in Italy, France, England and north Africa, and by these Moors in Toledo, Cordova, Seville, and Granada. . . . Where should we be today? If the spirit and learning and refinement of Cordova had spread over the whole of Europe, that continent would have been highly civilized, and science well developed, by the thirteenth century; America and the rest of the world would have been discovered earlier, and more wisely exploited in the early stages; and the whole race would be today in the condition of wealth, comfort, refinement, freedom, and general intelligence in which it will be about the year 2500.

Was Cordova, then, so wonderful? Yes, for the tenth century, for any age except ours, it was marvelous; and it could teach *us* many lessons in the art of living.

There remains only one monument of the Cordova of the Middle Ages, the Mosque, which is now the cathedral. No one would travel five miles to see modern Cordova if it were not for the Mosque—as every child in Cordova still calls it—but men go from all parts of the world to see that. After St. Peter's it is the largest place of worship in the world, and it is of a unique art and architecture. Externally it is not overpowering. The Moors, living so much in the shade, paid comparatively little attention to exteriors. Internally it is a wonderland.

You enter one of the nineteen doors, and you seem to have strayed into a forest of marble trees. Eight hundred and sixty slender shafts of marble, porphyry, and jasper support the roof; and there were formerly one thousand and twelve columns. Nineteen aisles lead between them to the nineteen doors. The comparatively low timber roof was richly decorated with scarlet and gold, and on the great festivals two hundred and eighty huge silver or brass chandeliers, burning perfumed oil, shed the light of many thousands of lamps over the scene. The largest chandelier was thirty-eight feet in circumference and bore fourteen hundred and fifty-four lamps. Fitted into its reflector, which increased the

blaze nine times, were thirty-six thousand plates of silver, riveted with gold and decorated with jewels.

The Mosque was built, in successive enlargements, in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, and the Mihrab or praying-place, the sanctuary of a Moorish mosque, the most richly decorated part, was twice shifted. The final Mihrab, at the far end, is a marble shell with an entrance that gleams like old gold or brocade with its superb mosaics. Christian workmen from the Greek Church, with which the Moors were quite friendly, came to Spain to construct it.

But for the wonders of the Mosque I must refer the reader to manuals of art or guide-books. It is one relic of a city so superb that none in the world can now compare with it. Abd-al-Rahman I, the founder of the dynasty, had modeled his new city, Cordova, on Damascus, where his early life had been spent. It was he who began the Mosque, and it is said by the Arab writers to have cost him and his successors three hundred million dollars. But this was only the last work of his life. He built superb palaces and many mosques, and his successors, and the vast community which grew in their capital, added yearly to the splendors of the city. Scott estimates that in its best days Cordova must have had a population of one million. Others say half a million, but the Arab writers tell us that there were ten thousand palaces (ten of them royal), one hundred and thirteen thousand houses, seven hundred mosques, nine hundred public baths, forty-three hundred markets, and five thousand mills along the river. Now, after all our "progress," Cordova is a poor and prosy town of about one hundred thousand very unpicturesque mortals.

The old city had ten miles of lighted streets, well paved (you tread the Moorish pavement today in many of them) and efficiently drained. Hundreds of the houses still remain, and you can picture the life of the Moorish family. Through a large and beautiful iron gate and a short dark passage you enter the patio, or central court (as in South America), which was the heart of the home. Flowers and myrtles, rich carpets and silks, cool mosaics and pretty arabesques, and almost always a marble fountain in the center, made it a delightful living room. Water was brought from the Sierra, miles away, and distributed abundantly, through leaden pipes. The Christians, when they conquered them, destroyed their baths.

The gold, a river flowing annually through the ruler's treasury, trickled down upon nobles, officers, literary men, scholars, merchants, and so on, and magnificent mansions rose for ten miles along the Guadalquivir. The bazaars were the richest in the world: not a spice or perfume or costly stuff, not a manuscript or carpet or musical instrument, could be heard of anywhere but it must go to Cordova. What America is now in this respect to the

old world, Andalusia was then, and far more, to the whole of civilization. The public pleasure gardens were feasts to the eye: you get some idea of the Moorish love of gardens from that at the Generalife at Granada and the large garden of the Alcazar at Seville. In every detail of life the Moors sought beauty. Music was forbidden, and profane poetry frowned upon, by the Koran; but nowhere else in the world was there such a passion for songs and poems. As to wine—even the priests drank it. One Khalif tried to enforce prohibition and destroy all the vineyards, but his Vizier restrained him and the wine was merely drunk in private until he died.

The Moors themselves were exquisite workers in metal and leather, made the finest silk and linen, carved the most beautiful inlaid furniture, made wonderful mosaics, were skilled in the arts of enameling and damascening, and carried the standard of internal decoration of houses and palaces to a height unknown elsewhere in the world. They had ample quarries of marble and alabaster, and further imported the marbles of Italy, Greece, and Africa. Their ships brought masses of cedar-wood, ivory, and ebony, and large quantities of the finest spices and perfumes that the east afforded, with gold, silver, jewels, mother of pearl, rock crystal, lapis lazuli, tortoise shell, and every known material of embellishment. They introduced into Europe the fruits and vegetables, the trees and flowers and scented shrubs, the incense and erotic poetry and flowing white garments of the east. Their financial resources were, as I said, so great for the age that they could command the world.

And they knew how to devote their resources to the art of living as few people did. The palaces of the nobles, officials, and scholars were only less luxurious and spacious than those of the Khalif, and even the home of the shopkeeper had a beauty and comfort which perished from Europe when the Spanish blight fell upon Andalusia. Moreover, the hundreds of public baths, lined with marble and mosaics, and the exquisite public gardens which stretched along the banks of the Guadalquivir extended the luxury of the Khalif to all classes. In every detail of their life they evinced a richness and delicacy of sentiment of which we are incapable. The twenty suburbs of the great city were not known as Pottsville or Newton, but "The Vale of Paradise," "The Beautiful Valley," "The Garden of Wonders," and so on; and garden cities they really were, with the white homes gleaming amidst broad masses of oranges, palms, and cypresses, with masses of flowers rising all the year round by the ever-flowing channels of water. Lakes, fountains, labyrinths, grottoes, colonnades—every device of the horticulturist or the artist was employed to brighten the eye and the heart. Across the river, over the wonderful bridge (twelve hundred feet long and ninety feet above the clear water

of the Guadalquivir) was another lovely garden suburb, almost an ideal city in itself.

When the day's work was over, Cordova was a riot of laughter and song, of perfumed sin and ardent intellectual discussion, of music from every instrument then known in the world. There were plenty of pietists, for Cordova had the greatest Mohammedan colleges and scholars in the world, and one devout Khalif enacted that a mosque should be built with every twelve houses that were built; but a light and healthy skepticism was the general attitude. Most men complied with the ritual requirements of the religion of the State, but not with its ascetic precepts and spirit. Neither Damascus nor Bagdad, and not even Antioch in its greatest days, was such a center of joy as Cordova was at the time when all the rest of Europe shuddered in drab superstition. There has never been in the world a happier and more generally beautiful and luxurious life than that of Andalusia in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries.

And possibly the highest tribute we can pay to the Moors is to recall that with this passion for sensual enjoyment they united, in equal proportion, a passion for intellectual entertainment and exact knowledge which was more widely diffused than it had ever been at Rome or Athens. Nowhere else in the world were, or even are, scholars so honored and so richly rewarded. Nowhere else were there such marvelous libraries, such busy schools and colleges, so numerous and fine a body of writers, so general a taste for intellectual discussion. The little circles of accomplished men and women in Italy discussing art and letters in Renaissance days were but feeble imitations of the life of the Moors.

MOORISH SCIENCE AND LITERATURE

It is the rare distinction of the Moors that they fully perceived the richness and happiness of a life in which sense and intellect were equally cultivated. Poetry was, naturally, the most conspicuous outcome of this harmonious development. All classes, from shopkeepers to the Khalifs, wrote and recited poems, and one of the most common spectacles in the perfumed gardens on a summer's night or in the beautiful central court of the house was the group of men and women discussing poetry and amiably disputing about their own rival productions. Music was cultivated with equal passion. In those days, literally, Andalusia was the land of song and love and flowers and perfumes.

But this passion for poetry and music was blended with severer intellectual pursuits in a way that we can scarcely understand. Where in our world is there any figure in the least approaching Ziryab of Cordova? Abd-al-Rahman awarded this man forty thousand gold pieces a year. He knew the words and airs of ten thousand songs. I do not know if that is beyond the accom-

plishments of our singers, but it is only part of the story of Ziryab. He was just as learned in the chief sciences of the time, in geography, medicine, history, and philosophy. He invented new perfumes and cosmetics, imported foods and drugs, prescribed more hygienic fashions of clothing, corrected the methods of diplomacy, induced people to add to the polish of social intercourse, and improved the sanitary arrangements of the towns; and his wit and epigrams were quoted throughout Andalusia.

Where in the world even in modern times will one find a ruler like Al Hakem II? Such was his passion for learning that he had collectors of books all over Spain and Europe, and in the end his private library contained at least four hundred thousand—some writers say six hundred thousand—manuscript books. The poetry of Arabia and Persia was supplemented by translations of the Greek and Roman poets. Plato and Aristotle and Euclid and all the classic writers were translated into Arabic. Prodigiously large works on medicine, geography, philosophy, astronomy, chemistry and history were written. And the contemporary historians would have us believe that Al Hakem knew well the contents of the whole half million books in his library! His commentaries were appreciated all over the world. Nor was he aristocratic in his intellectual life. He founded scores of new schools in Cordova and appointed his own brother the "Minister of Education" to see that all his people had opportunities for learning. Writers who ignore Al Hakem II and talk about the occasional cruelty of Abd-al-Rahman I or the pederasty of Abd-al-Rahman III deceive their readers.

This zeal for general education was common to the Moorish rulers, and their school system recalls that of pagan Rome and anticipates that of modern times; it was the one oasis of general education in the great desert of ignorance that stretches from the fourth to the nineteenth century—for, like the Christians of the fifth century, the Christian Spaniards wrecked the schools of the people.

Higher education was even more liberally supported than elementary. There were eight hundred public schools in Cordova, and pupils came from the ends of the earth to study in them. Inns were maintained out of public funds to house and feed the poorer students, and a little money was given, in addition, to each. There was no concern, except amongst the zealots, about the bearing of knowledge on religion. Indeed, Scott says that the universities and provincial colleges were "essentially infidel." Jews and Christians were as welcome in them as Mohammedans. A Moorish proverb ran: "The world is divided into two classes of people—one with wit and no religion, the other with religion and no wit." So it was in the beginning (of the present era), is now—and will cease to be in another century or so.

Who has not at some time read of the wonderful school-life, the founding of the early universities, which "Christianity inspired" in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries? And how many of my readers, I wonder, have ever read that three hundred years earlier there was in Mohammedan Spain a fervor for learning—for real knowledge, not the verbal gymnastics of the Scholastics—which was, literally, a hundred times as extensive, and was the real inspiration of the school-movement and the universities of the Middle Ages? Thus is history still written, in the interest of religion.

And this fervor for learning was fostered, not merely by a liberty of thought which was at least far superior to the condition of Christendom, but by a respect for scholars which has not returned to the world. The Khalifs not only paid large sums to distinguished scholars and made personal friends of them, but they were appointed to the highest offices of State and court. The Moorish rulers had the quaint idea, which may yet return to civilizations, that the men best fitted for planning and administering are, not talkers or intriguers, but men of science and proved intellectual capacity. Learned men in Spain did not live in obscure studies and laboratories while the public gaze was directed to nobles and soldiers and statesmen. They were amongst the richest and most envied, and the envy related, not to their princely mansions and superb retinues, but to their learning. This stimulated the entire nation with literary and scientific ambition. Nor were women excluded from the race. Many names of ladies of scholarly distinction may be read in Scott's work, and we learn that women competed with men in the public assemblies at which high rewards were bestowed for the finest poem or essay.

One must not pass to the opposite extreme and fancy that learning in Spain meant merely the graceful parasitism of the purely literary man, and that the successful word-spinner led a life of luxurious indolence. The industry of the scholars was prodigious. The most striking examples of precocious learning have come down to us, and the list of the works of the more famous scholars seems incredible; though Scott tells us that the Moorish writers, while florid and imaginative in description, are generally sound in statement of fact. They credit Ibn-al-Khatil with no less than eleven hundred books on philosophy, history and medicine. Ibn-Hasen wrote four hundred and fifty volumes on philosophy and law. Several encyclopedias of the time ran to more than fifty volumes, and the chroniclers are said to have numbered more than a thousand. A priceless literature perished in the flames lit by monkish hands when the Spaniards "drove the infidel out of Europe," as the teachers say.

Aristotle, who resented the pretty verbiage which is called the spiritualist philosophy of Plato, was the most realistic and scien-

tific of the classical philosophers known to the Arabs, and it enhances our regard for their genius that this nation of poets and lovers of beauty should have idolized him as they did. The philosopher Avicenna was distinguished for his learning at the age of sixteen and was Grand Vizier at the age of thirty. The philosopher Averroes (really Ibn-Roschid), who wrote the most famous commentary on Aristotle (mentioned by Dante in his "Inferno,") and whom even the monk Savonarola called "that man of divine genius," was said to have been so assiduous in study that there were only two nights in his life—his wedding night and the night on which his father died—which he did not spend in study. To him all "revealed" religions were impostures, and the famous medieval production "The Three Impostors" (Moses, Christ and Mohammed) was probably inspired by the saying of this early Voltaire that the Jewish religion was fit only for children, the Christian religion a tissue of impossibilities, and the Mohammedan religion fit only for swine.

Aristotle, it is increasingly realized, was—or would have been if Greece had consistently developed its early science—a great scientist as well as a metaphysician, and Moorish philosophers like Ibn-Roschid, who was physician to the Emir and chief judge of Cordova, cultivated science as well as philosophy. It was, however, the specialists in science who rendered the greatest service to the world. The entire space of a chapter like this would not suffice even to summarize what the Moors did for science, especially mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and medicine. The lengthy twenty-eighth chapter of Scott's work is itself only a summary of their intellectual achievements, and an ample volume would be required to do them justice.

Astronomy was one of the most esteemed and most widely cultivated of the sciences. The astronomers of Bagdad had inherited the lore of Babylon and of Alexandria, and they passed it on to Spain. There, as in ancient Babylonia, the places of worship were used for observation. It was from the elevated platforms of the minarets that the movements of the heavenly bodies were chiefly observed. The Chaldaic astronomers had found all that can, perhaps, be discovered with the naked eye, but the Moorish astronomers had instruments of precision, which were kept at the summits of the minarets. Telescopes, of course, they had not; though they laid the foundations of the science of optics, and Roger Bacon owes more to them than his Catholic admirers imagine. They had ten different kinds of quadrants and several other early instruments, besides terrestrial and celestial globes. They discovered that the "thunder bolt," as the rest of Europe called the shooting star, was a cosmic mass entering the earth's atmosphere; they had a fair idea of the height of the atmosphere and its decreasing density; they tabulated the movements of the stars,

made the first accurate determination of the length of the year, and found the eccentricity of the earth's orbit and the figures of the precession of the equinoxes.

"Alchemy" is an Arabic word, and, like algebra and so many other words, it reminds us of our scientific debt to the Mohammedans. From their colleagues in Cairo and Damascus, particularly, the Moors derived the principles of chemistry, and, had their civilization been spared or their culture developed, we should today live in a more wonderful world than we do. It was the Arabs, not the Chinese, as is generally said, who invented gunpowder—I mention it, not as a beneficent gift, but as a sign of the fertility of their science—and first made artillery. It is true that alchemy, the first form of chemistry, meant a prodigious waste of time in the pursuit of illusions, but, apparently, science had to pass through that stage before it could disentangle the elements of the material complex.

In physics they, being excellent mathematicians, did equally useful pioneer work. They drew up tables of specific gravities and guessed the nature of capillary attraction. They were the real inventors of the compass. The Chinese seem simply to have passed on to the Arabs a knowledge of the properties of the magnetic needle, and it was the Moors who mounted it on a pivot and provided the navigator with his invaluable instrument. They invented the pendulum clock and the balance. They substituted the Arab (really Hindu) numerals for the more cumbrous Roman numerals. They evolved the principles of optics which Roger Bacon developed, and the principles of electricity which Gerbert discussed. They even worked at the foundations of geology, observing the phenomenon of erosion and studying the nature of rocks.

"Mineralogy was cultivated in the tenth century by Arabian sages," says Dr. Woodward in his "History of Geology," "among whom Avicenna, a physician, wrote on the formation and classification of minerals." "Meanwhile the Moors were leaders of science in the west," says Professor Forbes in his "History of Astronomy," "and Arzachel of Toledo improved the solar tables very much." "By the thirteenth century," says Professor Miall, speaking of science generally in his "History of Biology," "the rate of progress had become rapid." "Under the rule of the caliphs," says Sir Edward Thorpe in his "History of Chemistry," "the study of chemistry made considerable progress." There is, in fact, hardly a science that is not greatly indebted to the Mohammedans of the east and of Spain; and the greatest debt of all is that we owe to them the restoration of the scientific spirit, the determination to find the laws and the exact phenomena of nature, which, though thwarted for a few centuries by the Church, could not again be expelled from the mind of man.

The strong humanitarian spirit of the Moors persuaded them

to lay special stress on medical science. Chemistry was to them, at first, only an auxiliary science to medicine, the science of drugs. In this direction, it is true, the Moors were hampered by the zealots of their creed—religion again!—for the Mohammedan religion would not permit the dissection of human bodies. The "soul" was believed to remain in the body some time after death. Surgery was, therefore, little advanced, and it long remained in the hands of the barber. But we can have little doubt that the great Moorish and Jewish teachers of medicine dissected animals, possibly human bodies in secret. At all events, the practical service of the physicians was raised above the appallingly low level to which it had sunk in the rest of Europe. Most of the great scholars were masters of medicine, whatever else they were; and it is recorded that the doors of even the richest physician were open to the poor at any time. Many new drugs were introduced into Europe.

History was no less zealously cultivated than science and philosophy and poetry. Geography was materially improved, for the Moors were the most skillful and daring navigators of the time, and their travels were as extensive as their cusiosity was keen. Botany is not less indebted to them, for the Khalifs sent out scholars to observe closely the native vegetation of Spain, and their gardens were "botanical gardens" of all the treasures of east and west. They had also zoological collections and they made observations in natural history which were very different from the crude traditions of other countries.

These very brief statements must suffice to show the reader how the Moors inaugurated modern civilization in its most important respect, and how true it is that the destruction of their culture, which is so glibly represented as an "expulsion of the infidel," suspended for a time the develoment of the race. Their science, however, could not be wholly extinguished, and it is to them, and to the ancient Greeks through them, that such Christian pioneers as Gerbert, Roger Bacon, Albert the Great, and Grosseteste owe their knowledge.

Take, for instance, the story of Gerbert. Born in the south of France in the tenth century, he studied at Barcelona and then at Cordova University. Every particle of his remarkable knowledge came from the Moors. He opened a school in Italy, the monks incited the mob to burn it, smash his instruments and disperse his scholars. Lay rulers, however, could not but esteem their one Christian scholar. He became a bishop and, by a freak of history, a Pope (Sylvester II) in the most degraded age of the Papacy. He died under strong suspicion of poison, in four years, and the Church (which now boasts of him) execrated his memory.

But the realistic scientific spirit of the Moors could not be killed. Slowly the glamour of their civilization pierced through the mists of superstition and ignorance, and begot some sense of

decency, some stirring of intellectual ambition, in Europe. It was in the eleventh century (following upon the golden age of Cordova) that Europe began to emerge from its barbarism. This was largely due to the political development which in turn permitted an economic development. Villages grew to towns and towns to cities. Laymen got knowledge, and bodies of burghers got ambition. Upon this awakening intellect of Christendom the brilliant civilization of the Moors was bound to make an impression.

THE MINISTRY OF THE JEW

The Jews, who are said to have numbered about one hundred thousand in Spain when the Moors arrived in the eighth century, had been almost as badly treated under the Visigothic kings as they were in other Christian countries. The common people, goaded by the story of the gospel and the pulpit, treated them with contempt and brutality. The rulers of Church and State robbed and exploited them without scruple. The founders of Christianity had become the helots of Christendom.

But the Jews of Spain—they had migrated thither in large numbers in the days of its Roman civilization—quickened with interest when they heard that a new religion and new policy had risen in the east which treated their brethren humanely. It was only in a later age that the Mohammedans developed the hostility to the Jew which one finds in the east today. The very liberal Mohammedans of Damascus were incapable of religious hatred, and the Jews were freely tolerated. These enlightened folk, the Spanish Jews now heard, had come as far as Morocco, and were turning their eyes toward the Spanish Peninsula. In short, when the Moors did at length cross the Straits and overrun Spain, they found useful allies in the Jews of every city.

The Moors had come to plunder, but they soon set about the organization of a new polity, and in that polity the Jews had an important and honorable place. Like the Christians they paid a special tax, and they wore a special costume and lived in their own wards or suburbs. But they soon proved their irrepressible genius, and rose to the highest positions in the schools and the State. Christians had the same liberty, but not the same talent; and there was far less in the monotheistic religion of the Jews to shock the keen intellectual taste of the Arab than in the fantastic story, the crudely disguised polytheism, and the tissue of legends which an Arab would see in the Christian creed and practice. Both Arabs and Jews were Semites, moreover, and Mohammed had been far nearer to Judaism than to what he regarded as its debased progeny.

Already in the east the Jews had helped in the early cultivation of the Arabs. Scott tells us that the first book written in Arabic was written by a Jew. He, in fact, sums up their services in these

words (ii, 165): "The Jews were, in turn, the teachers, the pupils, and the coädjutors of the Moors; the legatees and the distributors of the precious stores of Moorish wisdom." The knowledge of their privileged position in Spain spread through Europe, and from the horrors of Christendom the stricken children of Abraham endeavored to reach this new land of milk and honey. From the tenth to the twelfth century they formed a nation within the Moorish nation, yet without prejudice on either side. Jewish merchants, who had in other lands to hide their laboriously acquired wealth, lived in the most princely of mansions in Cordova and belonged to the highest social group. Jews rose to the most important offices of State, and they left a most honorable proportion of distinguished names in the long list of Moorish scholars. Of the four thousand notable medieval Jews in the catalogue of Barthoccius the vast majority belonged to Spain.

There was no branch of the very extensive learning of the time in which they did not excel. The Alfonsine Tables, which were regarded as the greatest astronomical achievement of the Middle Ages, were mainly compiled by Jewish astronomers. They were so assiduous in the cultivation of philosophy that there are said to have been more copies of the "Commentary" of Averroes in Hebrew than there were in Arabic. The Moorish and all other Arab treatises were translated into Hebrew, and the young Jews threw themselves with ardor into poetry, music, history, geography, natural philosophy, and chemistry as well as mathematics and metaphysics.

They were particularly eminent as physicians, and their more distinguished physicians imitated the greater Moors in absorbing the whole of culture. Moses-ben-Maimon, famous throughout Christendom and even in modern history under the name of Maimonides, was their highest representative in the field of science. A native of Cordova, educated at Cordova University, he was by profession a medical man, but a master also of philosophy and science. At the age of thirty he was already esteemed a scholar of the first rank. His family had emigrated to Cairo, where he became physician to the Sultan. Profoundly learned both in the Aristotelic philosophy and in Jewish theology, he attempted to rationalize the Jewish religion, and his vast and convincing works caused him to be known to his race as "the Light of the World." As one biographer says of him: "The importance of Maimonides for the religion and science of Judaism, and his influence upon their development, is so gigantic, that he has been rightly placed second to Moses, the great lawgiver himself." Ben-Ezra was second only to Ben-Maimon in his broad command of literature, astronomy, and medicine. It was, in fact, a catastrophe to the Jewish race in particular, quite apart from the brutality inflicted on it.

when the golden opportunity afforded by the Moors was snatched away by the Christian Spaniards. The narrow orthodoxy of the rabbis would otherwise have disappeared long ago under the influence of these Moorish-Jewish philosophers, and the race would have reached a happier condition.

The peculiar position of the Jews as a race without a country made them particularly useful in conveying the new culture beyond the frontiers of the Moorish kingdom; for the Moors themselves, naturally, rarely visited the semi-barbaric lands of Christendom, while the Jews had co-religionists and trade-connections everywhere. Spanish and Portuguese courts were scarcely established when we find Jews in high positions in them. Pedro the Cruel—and he deserved his name—refrained from cruelty only to the Jews, and they were, except when the priests goaded the people, quite happy in his kingdom. A Jew was his physician: another Jew the head of his financial department. Alfonso VIII entrusted the political administration of the kingdom of Castile and Leon to a Jewish physician. Alfonso IX had a pretty Jewess for his mistress; and such mistresses are more powerful than statesmen. Alfonso X, the patron of astronomy and of the Alfonsine Tables, the most learned Christian monarch of the age, used the Jews considerably to import the astronomy, medicine, and philosophy of the Moors into his dominions. Spain and Portugal advanced upon the Moors only at long intervals, and in the meantime they were absorbing the elements of civilization from them.

It was chiefly the Jews who took the Moorish culture beyond the Pyrenees and across the sea to Italy. The brilliant and tolerant civilization of the Moors was so well known at Paris in the twelfth century that Peter Abelard thought of seeking refuge there to pursue his studies in peace. Jewish doctors, trained at Seville or Cordova, were in demand everywhere, and it was largely these who conveyed the Arab culture. As Scott says (iii, 149): "The Jews were the principal medium through which Moorish civilization was permanently impressed upon Europe." But the Jewish merchant, risking his property and even his life everywhere, had a large share in distributing the manuscripts, as well as the drugs and perfumes, the silks and linens, the fine metal and leather work, the superb jewelry and inlaid ware, which told all the world that there was some inspiration, some genius, in Spain that Christendom lacked.

Even when the Moorish culture was trodden in the mud by the Spaniards, as their Vandal and Visigoth ancestors had trodden the Roman civilization, even when the Jews were exiled and scattered by one of the most brutal blows of the Inquisition, the members of the race bore with them everywhere the lore of the

Mohammedans. Whole regions of Spain were destitute of physicians when the Jews were expelled; and other regions of the earth were correspondingly enriched. They had already in large numbers reached the south of France, where the earliest Christian medical schools arose, and the north of Italy, where we find them active in the early history of Venice, Genoa, Florence, and the new commonwealths. Christendom despised and maltreated them; and it learned from them the human inspiration which would raise it out of the morass into which its supposedly superior religion had plunged it.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Renaissance: A European Awakening

The End of the Nightmare—The Call of Greece—The Papacy and the Renaissance—The Spirit of Humanism—Erasmus and the Other Humanists

The End of the Nightmare

RENAISSANCE is the French word for Rebirth. In its earliest use in history it referred to the revival in Italy of the ancient Roman architecture. Other countries had adopted the Gothic style, but the Italians preferred the purer lines of the old temples, whose stately remains still rose from the soil of their country to rebuke the barbarism of the new era.

Later historians, observing that it was not the pagan architecture alone that was reborn in the later Middle Ages, used the word Renaissance in a much broader sense. They meant by it the Rebirth of Greek and Roman literature and ideals as well as art, chiefly in the fifteenth century. That is the proper meaning of the word, but modern writers give it a still wider significance. The Rebirth of the classical spirit and literature was part of a very widespread "revival of intelligence, knowledge, refinement, and conscious mastery of life" so the Renaissance has come to mean the Rebirth of Civilization out of the darkness of the Middle Ages. It means to modern historians the entire transition from the Middle Age to the Modern Age, the Awakening.

This division of the Christian Era into Classic Age, Middle (or Dark) Age, and Modern Age does not flatter Christianity. It suggests that civilization was suspended during the long period between the death and the resurrection of paganism: that Christendom was coarse, brutal, and ignorant until the spirit of Greece and Rome restored it to some sense of dignity and humanity. And as our literature of general information is now largely written by anonymous priests and by literary men who would close like oysters if you asked them merely in what century Charlemagne lived, some singular ideas about the Renaissance are in circulation. In unexpected places you get smiling assurances that the "old history" was quite wrong: that now the splendor of the Catholic Middle Age is fully recognized, and the "tinsel" of the Renaissance is estimated at its true value. A Catholic writer (not an

historian, of course) who was entrusted with the Renaissance in a recent series of manuals for the general public, wonders, with the grave air of a Michelet or a Gibbon, whether it did not do more harm than good!

Unfortunately, historical writers often use language which these propagandists can quote. On the specious plea that history, like art, must be neutral, we find extraordinary concessions made to a false version of human events. Moreover, modern history is so specialized that it can hardly realize its own aim of taking broad views. No recent work on the Renaissance is equal even in historical truth, to say nothing of the appalling contrast in literary quality, to the superb study, written fifty years ago, by John Addington Symonds, "The Renaissance in Italy," and none approaches Jacob Burckhardt's "Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy" in detailed knowledge of the period. No one today, however, can find leisure to read a seven-volume work, like that of Symonds, and in a sense his beautiful and true study of the spirit of the Renaissance requires a correction. The blaze of his period so fills his eyes that all the previous history of Europe seems to him uniformly dark.

The finest recent study ought to be the first volume of the "Cambridge Modern History," which is entitled "The Renaissance." Unfortunately, it is not an analysis of the Renaissance and its meaning, but mainly a chronicle of the wars and other familiar "historical events" which occurred during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and its deliberate concessions to possible Roman Catholic readers, by inviting men like Canon W. Barry to contribute, make it in some degree historically false. Mr. S. Dark's recent "Story of the Renaissance" is similarly a piece of Catholic propaganda and is unreliable. The last edition of Professor W. H. Hudson's "Story of the Renaissance" (1924) is still the best manual of moderate dimensions.

Here we take the Renaissance as a stage in the evolution of Christendom, and a most important stage. What every thoughtful person wants to know is, not what antics the French kings played in Naples, but what is the religious meaning of this fact, now endorsed by all historians, that civilization, or a higher civilization, was not reborn in Europe until a thousand years after the adoption of Christianity: what is the exact relation of the Christian creed or Church to the previous barbarism and the later revival.

Academic historians often evade this unpleasant issue by gibing at "popular writers" who describe Europe as sunk in barbaric sloth until the revival of Greek literature in the fifteenth century, which is the main period of the Renaissance. Symonds thinks that the period proper is 1450 to 1500; others take the whole fifteenth century; and others—most recent writers—a pe-

riod of two or three centuries. It depends on the precise sense in which you take the word Renaissance, and it is well to remember that it has two definite meanings—the revival of classical literature and the revival of civilization.

Now it is an essential part of my program that the awakening began long before the fifteenth century. After a few centuries of barbarism Europe was constantly endeavoring to rouse itself from its torpor, but—this is what the academic historians will not clearly say—the Church murderously suppressed every attempt. Bogomiles, Cathari, Albigensians, Patarenes, Lollards, Hussites, and Luciferists (witches), representing millions of heretics, are just symptoms of the very widespread effort of Christendom, from the tenth century onward, to civilize itself in spite of Christianity; and the successful secularization of architecture, sculpture, painting, teaching, law, etc., is another symptom. Let me, as we are now passing from the Middle Ages to modern times, give a further and final illustration.

Historical writers who diplomatically, and with fatal effect, borrow a phrase or two from "Catholic historians" speak of the guilds as "inspired by the Church" (they were of pagan origin and the Church fought them for a century), the schools and philanthropy of the monasteries (which were generally colonies of sensual and slothful parasites, who rarely had schools even for themselves), the wonderful art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (which became wonderful only when it was secularized), and Dante.

I doubt whether any of these Catholic writers who enthuse about Dante ever read him. The third part of the "Divine Comedy" is, as Goethe bluntly said, "insipid." It is precisely a proof that pure Christian doctrine cannot inspire poetry. The other two parts are made interesting—Goethe says "repulsive"—by their material setting, but they are absolutely heretical from the Catholic point of view.

Read Canto iv of the "Inferno." Before entering hell proper, Dante comes to a "noble castle," with a charming "meadow of fresh verdure," and finds a number of "great spirits" leading a life of ghostly dignity and tranquillity in this desirable home. Their only punishment is that they are not allowed the "Beatific Vision" (of God) which makes up the bliss of Paradise. (And from Dante's description of this in his third book, I should say that they must have been profoundly grateful for the exclusion from heaven, for an eternity of such bliss, with no throat to cut, is a lot to which I would not condemn even Innocent III or Anthony Comstock.) These "great spirits," whom Dante honors with all his art, are the great pagans of Greece and Rome, the Moorish thinkers Avicenna and Averroes, and even Saladin, the deadly foe of Christianity!

In the next Canto, which describes the first circle of hell, with the very lightest punishments of that divine invention, Dante puts Semiramis and Cleopatra, Dido and Francesca, and all the prettier women known to history who lived in what the theologian calls the deadliest of sins, impurity. Throughout his "Inferno" and "Purgatorio," Dante classifies sins and sinners, not according to Christian teaching, but according to the social moral standard of Cicero and Aristotle.

And the meaning of this bold heresy of "the great Catholic poet" can be gathered from Canto x. It describes the quarter of hell, and by no means the worst quarter, where dwell "Epicurus and all his followers, who make the soul die with the body." Amongst these Dante puts the greatest monarch of the thirteenth century, Frederick II, the famous Cardinal Negli Ubaldini, and "more than a thousand" other Italians of his time! In this glorious thirteenth century, in other words, Florence was, in spite of the Inquisition, a hotbed of radical skepticism. Indeed, there is very strong reason to believe that Pope Boniface VIII, who crowns the century, was an utter skeptic.

Let us now go back to the early part of the century, when Pope Innocent III inaugurated the practice of murdering people who would not profess to believe what they did not believe.

We read that in the opening years of his reign Innocent had to fly from Rome, driven out of his city by anti-clerical democrats. We follow the clue and learn that in the twelfth century a fiery and noble-minded ex-monk, Arnold of Brescia, induced the Romans to throw off the authority of corrupt priests and establish the first Republic in the world since pagan days. He was, of course, hanged for this vile transgression of the ethic of Christ; yet fifty years later the democrats of Rome were still strong enough to make the aristocratic Innocent fly for his life. And I presume you never even heard of that splendid little man, Arnold of Brescia, or of the democratic movement in the heart of Christendom nearly four centuries before the time of Luther.

We may, in fact, divide "the Christian Era" into four parts. I may use round numbers, as they are near enough to the facts to justify me in thus simplifying the history of Christendom. The first section (1 to 500 A. D.) was not a Christian Era; during three-fourths of it Christians were a small and despised minority, and they won the majority only by the use of force. The next five hundred years (500 to 1000) were the Nightmare; not even the most ingenious historian of our time who wishes to distinguish himself by correcting his predecessors has attempted to lighten the darkness and mitigate the horrors of that real and only Christian Era. The next five hundred years (1000 to 1500) are the Awakening. To our positive knowledge hundreds of thousands, and probably millions, had to be killed by the Church to prevent

Europe from rejecting its tyranny. And the period 1500-2000 is the Dawn. It opens with the destruction of one-half of the Papal dominion; it sees irreligion broadening and deepening in each century; it already finds the Christian majority turned into a minority in every great civilization; its close will see the end of Christianity.

Christendom awoke, first, because a nation or a race does not, any more than an individual, sleep forever. One must not suppose that the terrible reaction from the fifth to the twelfth century is without parallel in history. Egypt twice fell into some such confusion, though apparently not to such a depth of degradation, in the course of its long history. China and India and Persia have similar periods. They awoke by the action of their own political and economic forces. Men find that order is preferable to disorder, wealth is preferable to poverty, security of life and property is better than lawlessness. The economic vitality of Europe again gathered in the condensations which we call towns. Wealth made for art and refinement, and a class of lay artists, teachers, and writers arose, who wrested what was called art and learning from the monks and raised them to a higher level.

Secondly, there was a very material awakening force which hardly any writer on the Renaissance properly appreciates; the stimulation of the Moorish civilization. The fact that Dante mentions with honor Avicenna and Averroes does lead some historians to remark, in a foot-note, that there *was* a civilization in Spain; but few seem to be aware that when he mentions Homer, all the Greek philosophers from Thales to Zeno, Euclid and Ptolemaeus, Galen and Hippocrates, he is borrowing from the Mohammedans. No one in his time in Italy knew Greek or had Greek books. The group of skeptical scholars in Florence to which Dante at first belonged, and whose influence he never entirely escaped, owed their culture to the Mohammedans of southern Italy or of Spain. The third awakening factor was the influence of Greek and Roman literature. These are the three fundamental influences in the Rebirth of civilization, and the other causes assigned are either effects of them or are of little importance.

The Crusades are often vaguely quoted as having contributed to the civilization of Europe, since they enabled the boorish Christian knights to see what civilization really was, in the refined Mohammedan world. But the influence of this hostile clash was trivial compared with the peaceful penetration of Europe by the Moors and Jews. One does not learn much on a battlefield except how to fight.

The astronomical revolution, the discovery that the sun is the center of the solar system, is given as a factor by all writers. It is one of the three causes of the Renaissance given by Professor Hudson; the others are printing and the discovery of new lands over-

seas. These two events are rather parts of the general awakening, or effects of the deeper causes I have assigned. As to the "Copernican Revolution," the effect of which modern writers fancifully exaggerate, it had no share whatever in the Italian Renaissance (which is regarded as ending in 1500 or 1520) and little elsewhere. The work of Copernicus did not appear until 1543, and its contents were known to very few until the days of Kepler and Galileo. Europe was then awake.

Much stress is laid also on the decay of the idea of a universal empire and a universal Church. Symonds thought that this lifted a burden of despotism from the minds of men and fostered the spirit of initiative and independence. It sounds rather fanciful. The classic revival would favor the idea of a universal empire; and certainly the monarchs of France, England, Spain, etc., were as despotic as the emperors had been. As to the idea of a universal Church, there had been wide revolts against it ever since the tenth century, but there were less in the fifteenth century than before. The Inquisition seemed to have triumphed. It was the corruption rather than the tyranny of the Church that stirred men.

If we admitted any fourth fundamental cause of the Renaissance, it should be the realization of the corruption of the Church. It fired Humanists like Petrarch and Erasmus as much as it fired Luther and Melanchthon. It was the deepest and most persistent cause of revolt. But the Renaissance was a rebellion of a very special kind. It is not in the same line of evolution with the big democratic movements of the Bogomiles, Albigensians, Lollards, Hussites, and Protestants. It was sensual, aristocratic, and scholarly; they were ascetic, democratic, and simple. Its standard was the pagan ideal; theirs was, generally, the Bible. The Renaissance was the beginning of modern times, if we think especially of the modern spirit; the Reformation, taking men back to Christ and the Bible, essentially rebuked it, and postponed its development.

It was a great half-century, that culminating period of the Renaissance, from 1450 to 1500. Every step in advance made the way easier, and put pride and joy into the heart of the wayfarer. Printing and paper gave a marvelous opportunity to the new ambition to spread knowledge. I do not compare it with the nineteenth century—I repeat that in the nineteenth century the world saw more progress than it had ever before seen in a thousand years —because science was too feeble to advance much, and because the Renaissance did little directly for the mass of the race. Ninety percent of the people of Europe remained illiterate, miserably poor, practically serfs. Catholic writers who point out this, and charge the Renaissance with aristocratic selfishness, have no sense of humor. *Their church* had made ninety percent of the people so ignorant and coarse. The Renaissance, which would in time have helped them (it greatly enlarged the artisan class)—was checked

by the old Church as well as the new or Lutheran Church. But it put a spirit into Europe; it gave a thirst for knowledge; it lit up a vision of science, which would never again perish. Our age is the son of the Renaissance.

THE CALL OF GREECE

Of the three fundamental causes of the awakening, I fully described the second, the inspiration of Mohammedan civilization, in the last chapter. The first cause I assigned, the internal economic development of Europe, is a matter that would require a large volume. I have lightly sketched it, but most readers will understand it even without the historical details. The consolidation of the new monarchies and republics of Europe brought about a more settled, a more protected life. The population increased and got more out of the soil. Market centers became towns, then cities. By the time of the Renaissance Italy had cities of a hundred thousand to two hundred thousand people. Cities meant wealth, leisure, thinking, luxury, art. Regular international relations promoted travel and commerce. The artisan class and the middle class greatly increased.

And when we remember that during all this time, from the ninth century onward, travelers were bringing into Christendom stories of the high culture and prosperity of Spain, we realize that Europe was bound to return to a fair level of civilization. Then occurred what we call the Renaissance in the stricter sense, the revival of classical literature, and it had a most important influence.

Europe had almost no Greek works and only an imperfect collection of the Latin classics. Catholic writers now remind us how (for reasons of Church policy) the Council of Vienne had in 1311 ordered the teaching of Greek and how this or that scholar of the Middle Ages knew Greek. As Sir R. Jebb says, "Several scholars" in the course of "several centuries" knew a little Greek—a fine record, surely—and not a single teacher was appointed after the Council of Vienne. No priest could read the New Testament in Greek. It was a dead language. Religious bitterness had raised an insuperable barrier between eastern and western Christendom. Even the Latin classics had so fallen into obscurity that the Humanists, as we call the scholars of the Renaissance, had infinite trouble in making collections of them.

Petrarch (1304-1374) is regarded as the first Humanist. The English poet, Chaucer, is often said to have been the morning star of Humanism, but the word is then taken in a broader sense. Petrarch is counted as the founder of the classical Renaissance.

However, there was a good deal of Humanism in Italy before the time of Petrarch, and his zeal for the classics was a direct outcome of it. Frederick II had done everything in his power to foster

the intellectual revival. From his youth, when Pope Innocent III had been his guardian and had taken shameless advantage of his position, Frederick had learned to despise the Church; and he had later appreciated the far higher civilization of the Saracens. Through his influence Florence and the other growing cities of Italy had begun to treasure lay culture and independent thinking, and had acquired the veneration of paganism that is reflected in Dante.

For men, the moment they began to reflect, saw three things: the degradation of Christendom, the corruption of the Church, and (if they had any learning) the superiority of Greece and Rome. Indeed, we must not forget that the really religious Popes, bishops, and monks did more harm than the corrupt majority. Gregory VII and Innocent III did incalculable injury to human interests; and the more pious monks were the men who thrust the classics out of sight and kept art and literature in swaddling clothes. The truculent austerity of the good Christians was as irksome as the hypocrisy of the others.

What really characterizes the new movement, from the thirteenth century onward, is the scorn of hypocrisy. Modern pagan writers on the Renaissance, like Symonds and Pater, describe, with equal elegance and feeling, how the Renaissance was an assertion of man's right to beauty and love. Catholic writers entirely agree in this—though, boasting of medieval art, as they do, they would rather say sensuality and love—and they appeal to the puritanism of modern times to see in the Renaissance only an outburst of immorality. Both are right—and wrong. Symonds never quite explains how this assertion of the right to beauty and love was related to men's religious belief; and the Catholic never explains how it was that his religion rose to its greatest height in the thirteenth century (he says), only to be followed at once by the license of the Renaissance.

There was a continuous intellectual revolt against the Christian religion long before the Renaissance, and there was a revolt of the heart, an assertion of the right to beauty and love, all the time since the fourth century. All through its history Christendom was generally and profoundly immoral. The difference was that in the earlier period the taste was coarser and the right to love was not regarded as an admitted right, but an encroachment on God's rights. Old-age or death-bed repentance or clerical incantations would put matters straight. It was a stupid frame of mind, the result of forcing upon human nature a creed which was really unnatural.

With the growth of intellectual life men became clearer-headed. We must remember always that we are speaking of a minority—the few who could read. All through these changes which fascinate the historian—the triumph of Christianity in the

fourth century, the Renaissance, the Reformation, etc.—the overwhelming mass of the people remained unchanged. The names in their prayers changed, that was all. But the thoughtful minority began to conceive God much like H. G. Wells conceives his Invisible King: he was not interested in small matters like love affairs. The Church, with its massive and general hypocrisy in regard to sex, was evidently a human business. The laity felt itself free; free to paint the human figure in all its fleshiness, as Giotto did; free to depict human joviality as it was, as Rabelais did; free to love, as people had hitherto illicitly done. It is absurd to say that there was a growth of immorality after the revival of Greek literature. It had no margin for growth. Now, however, in cultivated men, it was a deliberate act, on principle, and therefore not immoral.

Petrarch, the first of the Humanists, was the son of a Florentine lawyer who seems to have belonged to the cultivated circle which venerated pagan Rome. He had manuscript works of the old Latin writers, and Petrarch was reared in a high regard for these. After a time he settled near Avignon, where the Papal court then was, and the sordid hypocrisy of its puritan creed and open vices—unnatural vice was common amongst the clerics, from the cardinals downward, though women were as numerous as pages—intensified his veneration for Cicero. The Roman orator's sober and reasoned work "On Duty" (the chief moral authority used by Dante) gave a plainer map of life than did this ecclesiastical organization that lived by "the fable of Jesus Christ" (as a later Pope said) and outraged every letter of his teaching. Petrarch searched everywhere for, and got other men to seek, more fragments of the old Latin literature. He was a Christian and in orders, but he was clearly very independent of the actual teaching of the Church. It was too obviously human.

The Romans, Petrarch soon found, had candidly represented the Greeks as far greater thinkers than themselves, and he turned to Greece. The story of those days is a singular commentary on the worn legend, which one still finds in magazines and books, that the monks preserved the classics. When the Humanists began, there was very little even of Latin literature on the market. They had to spend whole lives traveling from town to town, and monastery to monastery, sifting the rubbish to find manuscript copies of the old Roman writers. Greek was a dead language in Europe, and scarcely anybody could have read or copied a Greek manuscript. Petrarch learned a little Greek from an Italian who had been some years in Greece, but there was no such thing as a grammar or dictionary, and he could never read the language.

Contemporary with Petrarch was his friend Boccaccio (1313-1375), author of the "Decameron": a serious scholar who was much prouder of his learned works than of his stories. At the instigation of Petrarch he took up the study of Greek and even made a

bad translation of Homer. Rich merchants were interested. The ambition arose to have collections of manuscript books. What we call "the Greek spirit" was discussed in literary gatherings, and to those men and women of the Middle Ages, living in a world of weird speculation and peculiar dogmas, it seemed as new and characteristic as Omar Khayyam seemed to moderns when he was first translated.

The Humanists recognized that the Greek spirit was the guide they needed. The real history of Judaism and early Christianity was quite unknown in those days, but educated men *felt* that there was something wrong in the account which the Church gave of itself and its authority. The Greeks gave them a sane and balanced creed. Strictly speaking, there is no single Greek spirit. The spirit of Plato is not the spirit of Aristotle; the spirit of the Stoics is so different from that of the Epicureans that the rivals fought bitterly. But there is the common element that they all speculate in complete independence of religious traditions. They make man his own oracle and legislator. They exalt human nature and natural law. They reflect a civilization in which there was a general cultivation of beauty and wisdom; a glorification of the human body in art, of nature in poetry, of the intellect in science and philosophy. This was just the note for awakening Christendom. Human nature felt that it had been oppressed and exploited. The Greeks gave it its Magna Charta, formulated its Rights of Man.

But we must be careful not to exaggerate. Down to the end of the fourteenth century and long after, only a few hundred people were involved in this new Humanism, whereas the Lollards, Hussites and witches (or Luciferists) must have numbered well over a million. Very few people could read, and so rebellion generally took the form of an appeal to the Gospels against the usurped authority and corruption of the Church.

I am not going to complicate this simple sketch by giving all the names and dates of the Humanists. In short, the living Greeks before the end of the fourteenth century discovered this new zeal for their old literature and began to encourage it and profit by it. A well-educated Greek, Manuel Chrysoloras, came to Italy on a diplomatic mission in 1391, and the cultured group at Florence prevailed on him to stay there and teach Greek. He wrote the first Greek grammar. Other Greeks now came over to earn a living by teaching, and chairs were set up in all the leading cities of Italy. Italians went to Constantinople, to learn the language at its source. The Turks were now pressing the Greeks very hard, and it was discovered that the fact that the western Christians were a little heretical as regards the procession of the Holy Ghost did not really matter so much—now that the Greek Empire was in danger. Traffic across the Adriatic increased, and the zeal for Greek spread into Italy. It is related of Guarino, one of the

Humanists, that, when his precious Greek manuscripts were lost in a shipwreck on his way back from Constantinople, his hair turned white in a day.

This was the great age of the Medici family at Florence, and the wealth which the bankers had accumulated, and the social and political power which the family acquired, were used on behalf of the new culture. Greek tutors were engaged for the Medici boys. Zeal for classical culture opened the door of the palace more easily than wealth or piety. Florence was becoming the wonderful city, the new Athens, which is so frequently described in George Eliot's "Romola." The "Cambridge Modern History" makes the point, which is worth noting, that Florence was not at all a city of vice. It was noted for its general sobriety and its disgust with the corruption of Rome. Other cities—Genoa, Venice, Mantua, Ferrara, etc.—followed the lead of princely Florence. Even Rome—always the last to join in a cultural development—had to adopt the fashion.

It was also the great age of art, which had a separate and earlier development. Architecture and sculpture had reached their height, and painting was in the first stage of its new evolution. Independently of any literary influence, laymen had taken over architecture and sculpture from the monks, and had by their soaring structures helped to educate Europe in a sense of beauty. This helped the new feeling for culture, and the revival of the classical standards reacted on painting and lifted it to its highest level.

But it was an historical accident which did most to promote the classical Renaissance. As I have said, the Greeks were relenting in their attitude toward the heretics of Rome because they wanted help against the Turks. The aggression of the Mongols had driven the Turks from western Asia into Mesopotamia, and they turned Mohammedan and joined the Arabs. We have here one more instance of the utter falseness of the Christian plea that *no* agency could have civilized the Teutonic tribes in less time—six or seven centuries—than the Church took to civilize them. Like the Arabs in the days of Mohammed the early Turks were not a whit higher in culture than the Teutons had been, yet, again like the Arabs, they were fully civilized within about a century; not by any religion, but by contact with the older civilization. They steadily encroached upon the Greek or Byzantine Empire, and in 1543 they took Constantinople. Then it was, especially, that Greek scholars swarmed to Italy, with manuscript copies of the old Greek classics in their trunks.

One may wonder—indeed, it is remarkable how few historical writers do wonder—why this Greek literature which they brought to Europe had not proved a greater inspiration to themselves. By the middle of the fourteenth century, hardly a hundred years since the first Turks had pitched their rude tents in Mesopotamia, the

Turkish Mohammedan civilization was so superior, not only to the Latin Christian, but to the Greek Christian, that numbers of Greeks fled to it and embraced Islam. The Turkish corruption with which we are more familiar belongs to later centuries of Ottoman history. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Turkish government or administration was one of the purest in the world, and art and letters were brilliantly cultivated; whereas the Greek Empire was, as I have shown in my "Empresses of Constantinople," corrupt, degenerate, vicious, and—in spite of its very conventional art and decorativeness—coarse and brutal.

I do not see how any historian can avoid the conclusion that the responsibility lies with the creed of the Greeks. It may have inspired many self-tormenting saints, as it did in Europe, on the principle that forty years' repression or starvation of their sex-impulses would be rewarded with an eternity of bliss. I am, I fear, obtuse to that kind of superiority. It may have insured a safe passage through the gates of heaven for millions: a matter on which I do not care to speculate. But its entire and lamentable failure to sustain a civilization is as obvious in the east as its failure to inspire a civilization is in the west. Not the German barbarism, but the creed imposed upon them, ruined Europe.

But these works which the Greek refugees brought to Italy, and helped to make known to Europe, entered a new world. One thinks of the seed stored in Egyptian tombs for millennia; or one would recall that fact if it were true that the seed will germinate if we plant it today. The Greek ideals were not dead. They had but lain for a thousand years in a living tomb. They were brought to Europe when the corruption of the Papal Church was at its height, and men were therefore prepared to consider other standards of life. They were brought to a race which had for a century or two been pushing, half consciously, in the direction of the Greek idea of life. That feeling was really anti-Christian, and we have to see how it was that no thunders from the Vatican fell upon the ears of the Humanists, and why so few of them were requested to explain their philosophy of life to the Inquisition.

The Papacy and the Renaissance

The Popes, as I said, were living luxuriously, and some of them immorally, in Avignon when Petrarch began the classical revival. Read his letters, and you will realize that it was in large part the spectacle of ignorant Christendom exploited to pay for the vices and luxuries of the Papal court at Avignon which made Petrarch turn with affection and regard to the old pagan world reflected in the classical literature. Petrarch loved when he listed, not when priests permitted it, yet the sight of Avignon, near which he then lived, in its Papal days makes him write as if he were a Marcus Aurelius.

During the seventy years' absence of the Popes at Avignon, which was due entirely to bribery and political influence, Rome sank rapidly in culture and importance. The grass grew on its streets. We have seen that it had never taken the lead in any cultural advance, and now the opulent cities of northern Italy regarded it with disdain. There was a serious danger of Italy disavowing the Papacy, and with much trouble the Popes were at length induced to return to Rome. A Neapolitan monk, of fiery speech, was made Pope, and, when he told the cardinals what he thought of their morals, they elected an Anti-Pope; and the cardinals sought the life of the Pope, and the Pope had six of them lowered into a deep well and almost murdered.

So the strange spectacle was prolonged from age to age—the heart of Christendom sinking lower and lower as the rest of Christendom rose in civilization—until at last the whole Church was outraged to learn, from the great Council of Constance, that the man who had ruled it for five years under the name of John XXIII was an ex-brigand of boundless sensuality, entirely destitute of religious or moral sentiments. Rome was by this time the butt of popular songsters all over Europe. The best elements in the Church united in a demand that the Roman masquerade should cease, and the Church should be governed by Councils.

It will thus be understood why up to this stage the Papacy had taken no interest in the new cultural movement. Three decent Popes then ruled the Church for a few decades, and the third of them, Nicholas V, was a man of some cultivation. He opened Rome to the classical revival. He began the adornment of the city with beautiful buildings.

It is now the fashion for Catholic writers to tell how the Church applauded the Renaissance and sought to direct the zeal for knowledge without infidelity and for beauty without license. Let us remind them that it was not until 1450—a century or more after the rest of Europe—that the Papacy began to show any concern for letters or art though its wealth was enormous. Let us remind them also that Rome, with its glorious ancient monuments, was the natural home for the Renaissance, yet it was not until 1462 that any Pope forbade builders to strip the marble linings off the old buildings to make lime and use the precious stones to make the miserable dwellings of the medieval Romans.

And, when it is boasted that Pope Nicholas V vied with the Humanists in a zeal for letters, let us recall that at his death in 1455 his collection consisted of only 1,176 manuscript books, mostly ecclesiastical literature, and that in 1484 the Vatican Library, "the most important library in the west in the fifteenth century" (an apologist in the "Cambridge Modern History" proudly says), had only about two thousand books. Six centuries earlier the Moorish ruler in Spain, Al Hakim, had had a library of

half a million books, and hundreds of his subjects, with not one-tenth the income of the Popes, would have regarded the Papal collection with disdain.

Nicholas V made a beginning, and it was quite time. That is the germ of historical truth in all the glorification of him by writers on "the Catholic Renaissance." Granted, you may say, but why cavil about these humble beginnings? Within a hundred years Rome became the most beautiful city in the world and had the greatest school of painters, sculptors, and architects in the world. A long line of Popes used all the resources of the Renaissance to embellish the center of Christendom.

I am meeting questions which occur to every thoughtful person and the answers to which are generally shirked by academic historians. And the question here is: What relation had this late artistic splendor in Rome, this patronage of the Renaissance by the Popes, to the Christian creed? The answer is: None. Of the inspiration of the artists I will speak later, but about the Papal patrons of the art there is now no controversy. The most learned Catholic historian of the Papacy, Dr. Pastor, is in line with all other historians. The Papal court had passed into a new phase of degradation, and, the less religious the Popes were, the more they patronized art.

Since the cardinals elect the Pope, it is upon these that the moral health of the Papacy depends, and for two hundred years the cardinals were, as a body, appallingly corrupt. At every election they fought, with gold and hired assassins, for the great prize, since the income of the Papacy was now stupendous, and the successful candidate was forced to make new cardinals of totally unworthy supporters, or chose to make cardinals of equally unworthy relatives. When the Popes were not corrupt, they were nepotists, promoting and enriching their relatives irrespective of character. The result was that during the period of what is called the Catholic Renaissance the Papal court had a degradation which differed from that of the tenth century only in being refined and perfumed and clad in silk. I have given the details in my "Crises in the History of the Papacy" and "Popes and Their Church," but the whole of them may be read, or discovered by the diligent inquirer, in the very extensive Catholic history of Dr. L. Pastor "The History of the Popes."

At the death of Nicholas V the rival cardinals fought until there was a deadlock, and a pious old Spaniard, the first Borgia, got the prize. His piety, however, was quite consistent with his rapid promotion of his amorous nephew, Rodrigo Borgia, who at once began to exploit the venereal opportunities of his high clerical position. The next Pope, Pius II, was actually a Humanist, but he did next to nothing for letters. He was gouty and repentant, and he saw "the gates ajar" in front of him. The next Pope, Paul II, also

was aged and inactive, and the stream of Roman life simply flowed on.

Then a Franciscan friar, Sixtus IV, became Pope; and Catholic writers tell how the patronage of art and letters in Rome took a more generous turn. They do not tell how Sixtus IV at once promoted two nephews (some historians say natural sons) of his who were as unbridled as Rodrigo Borgia. Sixtus IV said his prayers while Cardinal Pietro Riario, his younger nephew, painted Rome red—very literally, for his gorgeous palace had five hundred servants in scarlet silk. His favorite paramour, Tiresia, wore two thousand dollars' worth of pearls on her slippers. Pietro, a raw provincial youth until the Holy Ghost descended upon his uncle, spent nearly a million dollars (worth many times that sum today) and died of vice and drink, under the shadow of the Vatican, within two years. The other nephew was sober by comparison. He was piling up his dollars to buy the Papacy—it now went to the greatest briber—and his one luxury was handsome women. His children were not disguised as nephews or his chief mistress as a secretary. This was the "great Pope" of the future, Julius II.

When Sixtus died, Rome was an armed camp. The cardinals had troops of the medieval equivalent of gunmen, and the bribery was opulent. But it was again a deadlock, and the tired Holy Ghost selected Innocent VIII. In the new fashion he at once sent for his natural son, Franceschetto, and this youth leaned much nearer to Nero than to Christ. Most of the cardinals kept their pages—unnatural vice was as common as natural—and their mistresses in their luxurious palaces, and their gambling, in which half a million dollars might be lost in a night, was done in the light of their own lamps. But the palate for this kind of thing was becoming jaded in Rome, and the Pope's son wandered about at night, with his cutthroats, breaking into any house where a pretty maid or wife had been located.

The old Roman families, such as the Colonna and the Orsini, who regarded the Papacy as their proper heritage, had now to contend with three new broods: the Borgias, the Riarios, and the Cibos. All of them left it to a few old-fashioned cardinals to practice the old-fashioned virtues of chastity and sobriety, and for their advancement in the Sacred College relied on the new weapons, steel and gold. More than two hundred murders distinguished the Papal election of 1492, but Cardinal Borgia distributed amongst the voting cardinals gifts worth something like a million dollars and became the Holy Father. Rome gasped, and smiled.

We are now permitted to believe that there were "a few" bad Popes and a few others who had been "irregular" in their youth, but we are asked to admire how *rarely* Popes were immoral during their tenure of office. Is the world losing its sense of humor? This modern apologetic makes one wonder. In the first place, cardinals

are not usually chosen to be Popes unless they are well advanced in years, and, on careful inquiry, these new apologists will learn that men advanced in years are, curiously, not so ardent in love as they had once been. In the next place, however, the Papal record is, in view of this highly moral arrangement, to say nothing of the light of the Holy Ghost and the very special interest of Christ in his Church, quite picturesque. We really know nothing about the youth of the great majority of the Popes of the Middle Ages, but of those whose actions have been chronicled between 900 A. D. and 1500 A. D. twelve of the Popes were immoral (five of them in an unnatural way) during their term of office, and as many more had merely outburned their vices. For a series of generally old men, presiding over one of the most ascetic of creeds, it is certainly a gay calendar.

Alexander VI is by no means the worst of the Popes. Several Popes of the tenth century, as well as Boniface VIII and John XXIII, were much worse. But we happen to know him well, and even Catholic historians like Dr. Pastor now reproduce the birth-certificates of his six children.

In a sort of historical romance, "The Pope's Favorite," I have given a detailed picture of Rome and the Vatican in the days of Alexander and his latest mistress, a beautiful girl of fifteen when he first seduced her. The element of fiction in that book is light. It is simply history clothed with flesh; and it is safe to say that no professedly religious establishment that the world has ever seen could compare for a moment with the Vatican Palace at that time. Alexander's philandering was all conducted in the "Sacred Palace." Not content with his lovely young mistress, and although he was nearing seventy years old, he had other women brought to him. In 1496, four years after his election, the sixty-seventh year of his age, the Pope begot a son; and in the same year a severed head was found on a pole in Rome with the inscription: "This is the head of my father-in-law, who prostituted his daughter to the Pope." His favorite and dissolute son Juan was murdered, most probably by his brother Cesare, in the following year, yet as late as 1501, less than two years before his death, the veteran sensualist had orgies in the Vatican of so exotic a nature that my British publisher compelled me to curtail the description of one of them which I took from the highest possible authority, the Master of Ceremonies of the Vatican. The Pope and his son and daughter had fifty of the most beautiful prostitutes of Rome dancing naked before them. And the priest who wrote this down in the Vatican at the time concludes with the amazing statement that the Pope distributed prizes to those of his male servants who could demonstrate the greatest virility. I have read many descriptions of orgies, in many tongues, but his in the "Sacred Palace" is the most picturesque.

So the Popes did not discourage the Renaissance. That is the

serious point of my again writing on these matters. Rome and the Vatican were drenched with what the Christian ethic calls corruption. Alexander's rival, Julius II, had to wait so long for the Papacy, that the days of his natural and unnatural vices were over. He was quite a proper Pope, a very great patron of art; but he swore like a stevedore, and his passions were only less elegant than the amorous excesses of his cardinal-cousin. Leo X followed him, and fully sustained the princely patronage of art; and he had the most grossly indecent comedies enacted in the Vatican; he is said by the contemporary historian Guicciardini to have been, as Pope, "excessively devoted to pleasures which cannot be called decent" (he means unnatural vice), and was quite clearly devoid of any moral sentiment and most probably of religious sentiment or beliefs. Paul III closes the period of the Catholic Renaissance; and he had been made a cardinal because his sister was Alexander's mistress, and had had four children born in his palace.

Need one say more? You can read all this in Pastor, the Catholic historian. The poor man imagined that, when Leo X threw open the Secret Archives of the Vatican (after abstracting the compromising documents), and urged Catholic writers to "tell the truth," the Pope meant what he said. So he wrote a fairly (not entirely) candid history of the Popes of the Renaissance; and his Church has kept him in sackcloth and ashes, so to say, ever since. The whole story is, however, now well known. Rome was as conspicuous for "free love" during the Catholic Renaissance as Corinth or Antioch or Alexandria had ever been.

But to complete the story we must glance at the sources of the wealth with which the Popes built St. Peter's, decorated the Vatican, and drew great artists from all sides to form a Roman School.

Here again there is no dispute. It was tainted money, if there ever was tainted money. The simony of Rome, the sale of sacred offices, shocked Christendom even more than its vices. For two hundred years the system had grown of selling a clerical office with income before the holder died—selling it to various people, with "expectations" and "preferences"—and charging fees for every grace and permit that Rome had to issue. John XXII at the beginning of the fourteenth century so organized and enlarged this traffic as to secure an acknowledged income of about a million dollars a year; and the brother of his banker tells us that he left sixty million dollars in gold and jewels, the far greater part of which never passed through his ledgers. We must not forget, moreover, that a dollar would then purchase many times as much as it now does.

But Pope after Pope extended the sordid traffic and discovered that "indulgences" could be gained just as easily by those who remained at home and paid to the Church the price of a journey to Rome as by those who made the actual pilgrimage; and since one was robbed all the way across Europe, and even in St. Peter's, to

say nothing of the loss of time and business, the easier way proved popular. It was like the discovery of the Californian gold-fields. The Popes sent agents out over Europe, and, unfurling the Papal banner in the churches, they shouted their wares with all the oratory of street-salesmen, and the gold flowed in streams to Rome. It is estimated that Leo X, who is generally named by Catholics as the greatest patron of the Renaissance, spent about two million dollars (ancient value) a year, and left enormous debts at his death. Nor was it, in his case, mere zeal for the prestige of Rome that cost so much. "The splendor of the Leonine Age," says Dr. Pastor, "so often and so much belauded, is in many respects more apparent than real." He spent prodigious sums on luxuries for the Vatican palace, but neglected the Roman University, slighted Michelangelo, and did relatively little for sculpture and architecture. His tastes were in many respects gross, and his rooms and gardens stank with what his Church calls indecency.

St. Peter's, the Sistine Chapel, and the other memorials of the Catholic Renaissance are monuments of the corruption of the Papacy. For a season the great art of the Renaissance found a superb opportunity in Rome, precisely because the spirit of Christ was utterly forgotten in it for a season. Of the eight "Holy Fathers" who ruled the Church during that season, from 1484 to 1549, five were fathers in the carnal sense, and the other three reigned only twelve years collectively. All the time the atmosphere of the clerical world was one of extravagant luxury and every kind of vice, and the funds for it all were derived in ways in comparison with which the ways of the money-changers whom Jesus is said to have driven from the Temple were as innocent as the games of children.

The Spirit of Humanism

The leading scholars of the Renaissance are generally described as the Humanists, and the latter word is, like the former, open to more than one interpretation. The poet Chaucer is often hailed by literary men as the first Humanist, though his Humanism had no relation to classical literature; and the philosopher William of Occam is hailed by philosophical writers as the first Humanist, though his work in turn was unaffected by Greek or Roman literature. In our own day a new meaning has been read into the word.

It is, in any case, an awkward term. Properly speaking, it ought to mean a concern about human affairs rather than divine. The Agnostic is the only real Humanist, and ours is the dawning age of Humanism, the inauguration of the kingdom of Man instead of the passing kingdom of God.

But the persistence with which the word has clung to the scholars of the Renaissance brings out a very important truth. Few of them rejected belief in God, but as a body they rejected the

tyranny over life and culture exercised by the clergy in the name of God. They brought the world nearer to Humanism. Painters and sculptors demanded the use of living human models instead of the lifeless conventional figures which had hitherto been copied. Literary men demanded that they should be allowed to tell stories and write poems or songs about common human life—be as free to describe a sin as the painter was to describe a limb—and not confine the pen to chronicles and hymns and lives of saints. Teachers insisted on the value of instruction about man and nature as well as about God. Philosophers determined to speculate freely about man and nature apart from revelation. The Renaissance was, as Michelet said, "the discovery of the world and of man," but man was the more important of the two. Humanism is a note rather than a creed in the Renaissance.

But the note is skeptical and it is significant in world-history. It was a rebellion against the genuine teaching of the Christian creed. The interest, the inspiration, the high potentialities of man had been obscured by the miserable philosophy of human nature which priests imposed in the name of the Bible. If the race lay under a primitive curse, if all men had died in Adam, as Paul said, Paul's attitude to human nature was correct. If Jesus was right that to look with desire at a beautiful woman was to be punished for all eternity, and that wealth was a very serious handicap to one's hopes of heaven, the moral was clear.

Yet somehow, in the course of that long awakening that I have described, human nature was vindicating its worth in spite of the creed. Men felt that they had the high powers which priests denied. Unconsecrated men wrested in succession from the hands of priests and monks the arts and crafts of building, carving, painting, governing, making laws, teaching, thinking, writing, etc., and each rose to a much higher level. In a glorious burst of confidence, strengthened by the example of the Mohammedans, they tried their creativeness, and they found it as great in art as in industry. And the discovery of beauty, in woman or in nature, brought its usual sequel: the assertion of the right to love and to enjoy. It was the beginning of naturalism as a deliberate creed, and the beginning of the end of supernaturalism.

It is easy to see how the classical revival, which supervened upon this development, stimulated it. It was the human form that had inspired the world's greatest artists. It was in an age when men were proud of their human nature, and had no theology which overshadowed it, that man wrought his finest achievements. It was a little nation with the least tyrannical and most superficial of religions (as far as the men who *did* things were concerned) which gave us the finest philosophies, finest sculpture and architecture, finest tragedies, and finest ideals of corporate and individual life. Pride in human power is the real Humanism of the Renaissance.

It is usual to contrast Humanism and Scholasticism, the system of theological thought elaborated in the medieval schools which became the universities of Europe. As I have occasionally pointed out, some modern writers, partly to make a parade of liberality, partly to say something new, partly in a consciousness that a sixth of the reading public in America is Catholic, borrow phrases from Catholic writers. Scholasticism had been calumniated, they say; it was not a barren system of thought, discussing such things as how many angels can stand on the point of a needle. Let them try to read the Scholastics, as they have obviously not done. When I was a Catholic professor, I found that even my colleagues never read them. There is no living thought in them.

But Scholasticism is interesting on one side. Large numbers of French students went to work amongst the Moors in Spain, and it was impossible for men like Thomas Aquinas to ignore that a very high civilization smiled at his verbose deductions from Scripture and the Fathers. These Moorish philosophers, he found, swore by Aristotle; and just at that time Greek copies of Aristotle's works reached Paris. The Crusaders had gone out to meet the Saracens once more, and they had this time preferred the easier and more profitable task of taking and sacking Christian Constantinople (1204 A. D.). They brought home manuscript copies of Aristotle amongst their loot, and these were translated into Latin. Aristotle was henceforward used to give some substance to the frothy verbiage of the Schoolmen. Some (Roger Bacon, etc.) tried even to develop the germs of science buried in Aristotle's works, but the Church smelt sulphur at once and stamped out the danger.

The philosophical works brought to Italy in the fifteenth century were chiefly those of Plato and the Neo-Platonists. I cannot discuss here the contrast between Plato and Aristotle. One illustration must suffice. Plato used all his art of rhetoric and reasoning to prove the personal immortality of the soul, and Aristotle rejected the belief. So, as the Humanists followed Plato, there was a very decided hostility to the professional or clerical teachers of theology and philosophy. The main point was, however, that Plato was used as a cover for free speculation, while the teachers in the universities were hidebound. The Church, naturally, watched this side of the Renaissance, and some, like Pomponazzi, were driven to say that a thing could be false in the light of reason and true in the light of religion.

Philosophy is, however, a subject too large for the limits of my space and, to say the truth, too small for my inclination. Let us pass to the other extreme and consider what influence the new spirit had on art.

Until well on in the fifteenth century the classical revival affected a relatively small number of people, whereas medieval art was then far advanced. Painting, however, lingered behind sculp-

ture and architecture. It began its higher development, in Giotto, independently of classic literature, by the sheer artistic impulse to reproduce beauty as it actually was, in man and nature. Yet it had not reached its great days when the classical ideals began to be diffused in Italy, and the influence of the new spirit is then plain to the eye.

It will suffice here to consider for a moment the two supreme artists of the Roman school, if not of all Christendom, Michelangelo and Raphael. I have described the skeptical and sensual atmosphere in which they worked, but one is constantly confronted with the claim that, as they were "profoundly religious" men, they found their mighty inspiration in their own piety in spite of the scurrilities of Popes and cardinals. I would not here express a personal opinion, and I have earlier quoted Symonds and various authorities on art. But it is interesting to see how Professor W. H. Hudson, who had a weight of authority behind his words, deals with these artists in his particularly valuable chapter on the art of the Renaissance.

He quotes the often-quoted saying of Michelangelo, that the painter of religious pictures must, if he is to succeed, be a good man, or "even a saint." The Catholic (forgetting the paintings of Pinturicchio, a very wicked man, or of Rubens, a very fleshly man) generally ends there. But Professor Hudson goes on to say that "no man did more than he [Michelangelo] to destroy the religious meaning of traditional Christian art." The great artist, he says, contributed mightily to the "secularization" of painting, sculpture, and architecture. He says in one of his sonnets that the highest manifestation of God is in "human forms sublime." And of his wonderful painting of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel, to which the enthusiast will turn most eagerly for proof of religious inspiration, Professor Hudson observes that it is "difficult to detect the play of any distinctively Christian feeling," that "the last link connecting art with Christian tradition has been broken," and that "to regard it as a Christian interpretation of a Christian theme is absurd," ("Story of the Renaissance," pp. 205-6).

Raphael, on the other hand, he says, sometimes shows religious inspiration, but "more often he simply paints the most beautiful woman he can find as the representative of motherhood, without indicating, either by symbolism or by general tone and expression, the transcendental significance of his type" (p. 203). Murillo in his best work does the same, and it is the general truth about the Renaissance painters. Like Rubens, who loved to paint the luscious nude body of his mistress as Venus—there are three known copies of his "Venus and Adonis"—they painted figures from the ancient mythology and allegory just as beautifully as they represented the Madonna and the Bambino. Titian, the last great Italian painter, was a pure Humanist. Rembrandt shows art fully secularized.

Dürer and Holbein seem to the expert to reflect the influence of Protestantism. In any case, the broad historical fact is that once Rome was purified of its paganism and sensuality, all great art ceased in it. Let the admirer of the Catholic Renaissance digest that.

In literature the spirit of Humanism did not wait for the classical revival, but it received a remarkable invigoration in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Chaucer is decidedly a Humanist, and the entire body of troubadours and song and ballad makers of earlier centuries represents a determination to secularize music and poetry. By the fifteenth century many of these popular songs actually satirized the vices of the clergy and the greed of the Vatican. Then came the new learning, and Italy soon had its Petrarch, Boccaccio, Ariosto, Tasso, Cellini, Machiavelli, etc.

A very distinctive effect of the classical Renaissance, and more particularly of the *Catholic* Renaissance, if we were to take that phrase seriously, was the revival of indecent comedy. The comedies of Plautus and Terentius are now cited by the apologists as one of the symptoms of the low moral tone of the pagan world, but he would be astonished if he took the trouble to ascertain how fond the Popes were of seeing them acted in the Vatican. In point of fact, they are much less gross than they are represented to be by the people who do not read them. I have a complete edition of the Latin Comedies of Plautus, and have read them all. The least delicate is the "Menaechmi," and it was performed in the Vatican Palace before the end of the fifteenth century, and often repeated.

Such comedies proved so popular that a large number of imitations of them were composed, and Pope Leo X was one of their most ardent patrons. His intimate friend Cardinal Bibbiena (who had his bathroom frescoed as the bedroom walls of houses of love in Paris today) wrote some of the most lascivious, and Cardinal Cibo took leading parts in them. Ariosto, Michiavelli, and others contributed to this kind of literature, and it went all over Europe. Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" is directly inspired by the "Menaechmi" of Plautus.

Here the Renaissance found a material implement of an importance that cannot be exaggerated: the printed book. Artless pictures of the monks of the Middle Ages copying and preserving the classics for us no longer move us when we know that Moorish rulers had libraries of half a million manuscript volumes, and when we read what infinite trouble the Humanists of Christendom had to get the classics together in the fifteenth century. Yet it was a revolutionary advance in the education of the world when paper and printing came into use. I am a quick writer, yet find eight thousand words—not of original composition, but of copying or translating—a day, too severe a task to contemplate daily. A monk would take a lifetime to make, at the rate of one per week, a thou-

sand copies of this one chapter. A machine can produce them at the rate of five thousand or more an hour.

Paper had been introduced from China by the Mohammedans, and Christendom very slowly and reluctantly borrowed it from the Moors. Printing also should be traced back along the same route, for the Chinese had for ages been accustomed to block printing. In the middle of the fifteenth century, the turning point of the Renaissance, this led to the invention of printing by separate letter blocks, and before the end of the century there were twenty-two master printers in Cologne and a number in each of the German cities. By 1465 there was a press in Italy, five years later one in France, and in 1476 the Caxton Press was established in England.

Although printing was at first necessarily very slow, there can be no doubt that the multiplication and cheapening of books would soon have led to an extension of culture to the more thoughtful workers if the normal course of events had not been broken by the Reformation. The works of Erasmus, in particular, were read far beyond the circle of the cultivated few. In the main, however, as we should expect at so early a date, the efforts of the Humanists were directed to the improvement of such education as already existed. Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino in Italy, Johannes von Sturm and W. Ratke in Germany, Comenius in Moravia, Roger Ascham in England, opened model schools, and forced the introduction of the "humanities" into education. Rabelais has many ideas for the reform of education in his extraordinary work, and Montaigne gave currency to them in a more respectable medium.

The effect of Humanism upon the study of science, which was at once seen in the work of Francis Bacon, is too important to be discussed in a few lines. We must, however, note here that the critical spirit, which is the essence of science and of all discovery of truth, was at once aroused by the classical Renaissance. The Italian critic Lorenzo Valla, in fact, better deserves a place in the memory of our age than most of the monarchs and Popes of the Middle Ages. A fierce critic of Scholasticism, an avowed follower of Epicurus, he was the first man in Christendom to examine fearlessly the bases of the Papal power and expose the forgeries. In 1440 he published a short study of the supposed Donation of Constantine which opened the eyes of many to the real character of the Papacy, and he was the first to apply criticism to the New Testament. Naturally, the Inquisition sought to make his acquaintance, and he earned the protection of the Popes by abjuring his wicked habit of telling the truth and devoting his genius to such innocent subjects as "Elegancies of the Latin Tongue." A century later the power of the Vatican was shattered over half of Europe, and a complete edition of Valla's works helped to lay the foundation of modern critical history.

Erasmus and the Other Humanists

Geographical circumstances account for the original development of civilization, not in what we call the Great White Race, but in Crete, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. The same geographical circumstances explain the Rebirth of civilization in Italy, as we have already explained. Germany had had its hour of hope under Charlemagne, and its period of achievement when it developed the Romanesque architecture. France had had a promising civilization, inspired by the Moors, in its southern provinces, had taken the lead in the revival of schools, and had given the world the Gothic architecture. But religious reaction and political vicissitudes had brought these efforts to an end, and it was the breathing of the spirit of the old world, through Moors and Byzantines, upon the nearest country, Italy, that effected the real and lasting awakening.

From Italy "the new learning" naturally passed at once to France, and as early as 1458 Greeks were teaching Greek in Paris University. The French, like the Spaniards and Rumanians, flatter themselves that they are a Latin nation—strange how persistently Christian nations have claimed affinity with the wicked old pagan civilization—and they had a temperamental inclination to a classical revival. In the south, moreover, they had, like Italy, beautiful and impressive remains of Roman days. In point of historical fact, the Renaissance did not at once conquer France. Until the French invaded southern Italy in 1494 there was little effect of the revival except a group of students of Greek literature.

After 1500 the new spirit gained ground. From the court downward manners were refined, and from the university downward education was reformed. Men of great and real learning like Scaliger and Casaubon arose; Rabelais put his remarkable erudition and his skeptical and stimulating ideas in a form which appealed to the lingering grossness of Christian taste; and at length Montaigne (1532-92) formulated the new spirit with an elegance and sobriety of taste which commended it to all who could read. The great age of Richelieu and the Academy, of Molière (a complete skeptic), Racine, and Corneille soon followed, and prepared the way for Voltaire and Rousseau.

But Paris rendered one early service for which it thought nothing at the time. It taught Erasmus Greek. Erasmus, the man who "laid the egg which Luther hatched," did more than any other single Humanist to spread and deepen the influence of the Renaissance. A traveler in Spain in 1527 found in almost every country inn in that reactionary land a translation of the "Encheiridion" (or moral treatise) of Erasmus. Another and bolder work of his, the "Colloquia," was brought under the grave consideration of the Sorbonne at Paris, and it was expected that it would be condemned. A Paris printer hastily brought out and distributed an edition of twenty-four thousand copies of it; and this, even in our

time, is a larger circulation than a serious work of any price could hope to attain. It is a measure of what the modern world owes to Erasmus, and should be carefully considered by those who, not living in the days of the Inquisition, lightly blame him for not joining the Reformers or even heading a pronounced Rationalist movement. His works were eagerly read all over Europe, and had a remarkable influence in spreading the critical and humanitarian spirit.

Desiderius Erasmus was a Dutchman, born in Rotterdam in 1467, the illegitimate son of a doctor's daughter. Gheraerd was his father's name, which he Latinized as Erasmus. He became a monk, for the convenience of his guardians, and had a wicked eye on monks ever afterwards. "They are called fathers," he says of the friars, "and they often are." He became a priest and went to study theology and Greek at Paris and in Italy. His wit and brilliant talent opened every door to him, but he migrated to England, where he gave powerful assistance to the little group of Humanists, and pointed the true moral of the new learning by publishing his "Encomium Moriae" (Praise of Folly), a mirror of the folly of Christendom in tolerating such priests and Popes as it had. For the last twenty years of his life he lived in southern Germany, where his works did much to prepare the way for the Reformation.

Known in four countries, indeed in the whole of civilized Europe, as the most brilliant man of his time, Erasmus had a thousand readers for the reader of any other serious writer of the seventeenth century. And he did not hesitate to season his work with, not only his pungent wit, but passages which show how entirely free his mind was. His most effective work was his "Colloquia" (Conversations), a familiar and mirthful indictment of the religious comedy of Christendom. It is, says a recent writer, "a masterpiece," but "disfigured by lewd and unchaste passages." That was why Christians read it in the tens of thousands, and had their eyes opened. It was condemned by the Sorbonne, and burned in Spain, not for its "lewdness," but for its scorching exposure of religion. Erasmus knew that the world was not ripe for a powerful movement on the lines of his own intimate ideas, and he remained a nominal Christian, stimulating people to think by attacking plain abuses. He refused, when pressed, to join Luther precisely because he did not believe the Christianity of Luther any more than the Christianity of Thomas Aquinas. He did a mighty work for modernism, and that is enough for us.

In Germany the work of the Renaissance was brief because it was soon lost in the roar and chaos of the Reformation. Erasmus was not the first to teach Greek and translate Greek books there. Johann Müller and Rudolph Agricola had been to Italy to study Greek early in the sixteenth century, and they prepared the way for Erasmus in Germany. Johann Reuchlin, the first great German

Humanist, studied Greek at Paris and in Italy, and he revived the study of Hebrew (hitherto almost confined to the rabbis) which would in time, in a freer age, inspire the beginning of biblical criticism. Reuchlin was summoned before the Inquisition at Cologne, a dense center of reaction, and although a representative of the Pope saved him, the friars persevered and induced Rome later to condemn him. He inspired Melanchthon and worked with Ulrich von Hutten. But there was formidable opposition in Germany to the Renaissance.

In England the service of the classical Renaissance in guiding and confirming a native development, or broader Renaissance, is particularly clear. Early in the days of Humanism a few English scholars had gone to Italy to study Greek. They were "monks of Canterbury," and on their return they taught at Canterbury. The news slowly spread, and Oxford University, and later Cambridge University, started chairs of Greek. Erasmus went to England first in 1498, and he taught there from 1510 to 1513. He does not say so, but the heavy piety of the English Hellenists—one hesitates to call them Humanists—cannot have been entirely to his taste. It was a church group. Grocyn was a conservative Doctor of Divinity. Colet was Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral and an early Protestant in his zeal for pure and primitive Christianity. Linacre was a royal physician, but ended his days as a priest. Sir Thomas More, the wit and scholar and Utopianist, was the only real Humanist; and he must have astonished, if not pained, Erasmus by eventually suffering the removal of his head for the Catholic faith.

Even in the sixteenth century, says Sir Richard Jebb, "Britain produced no scholar of the first rank," and "the British press sent forth few books which advanced Greek or Latin learning." A painful confession for an academic Englishman, but, as all the world knows, England produced something of infinitely greater value than commentaries on Tacitus or new editions of Ovid. It not only reformed education in the classical sense, and produced some great early educators, but it gave birth to Shakespeare and the Elizabethan drama, to Francis Bacon and the new zeal for science, to a literature which would not shrink, as the Italian did, but remain fertile in great productions down to the nineteenth century. It adopted the classic model in architecture, started a new school of painting, joined with great effect in the conquest of the seas, brought about a general refinement of manners (compared with the Middle Ages), and founded "the Mother of Parliaments."

That in all this we have to see the quickening of a native development by putting into it the ferment of the classical spirit needs no proof. Shakespeare teems with evidence. Even his early comedies are inspired by Plautus and the Italian imitators of Plautus, his tragedies often turn to pagan themes, and his language is one of the most singular mixtures of exquisite imagery in pure English

and long Latin words which many of his hearers can hardly have understood. Francis Bacon is heavily indebted to early Greek science. Thomas More is equally indebted to Plato.

The political and economic conditions were at the time favoring a revival of civilization in England, but the effect of the Renaissance, in the narrower sense, is obvious. Men caught its spirit even when they ignored its scholarship. The standard of conduct remained gross, both before and after the Reformation. The life of the mass of the people—"the clowns," in Shakespearean language—was so coarse and stupid that we can hardly imagine it. The idea that Elizabethan days had more sexual license than earlier days can only occur to people who do not know the Middle Ages. But this freedom, as I said in speaking of Christendom generally, became more deliberate and respectable. It was not a sneaking infringement of a divine law. Man had a sense of mastery. Life and love were his possessions. The soft touch of silk, the perfume of flowers, the thrill of gay music and dancing, the flash of gold and jewels, were good things; and if they did quicken the pulse, well . . . . Men were not yet quite clear how they stood with the Almighty in such matters, but they were vaguely asserting that human right to all knowledge, power, and pleasure, which our age is at length formulating in incontrovertible terms.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Reformation and Protestant Reaction

The Disgust of Christendom—Why the Reformation Succeeded —Martin Luther—The Catholic Reformation— Humanity Crucified for Christ

The Disgust of Christendom

IN the spring of the year 1415 a General Council of the Church of Christ met at Constance to deliberate on the indecent spectacle presented by its Popes and its clergy.

This Council represented all the chief monarchs and all the prelates of Europe. The ablest scholars and the most learned abbots assured it that its authority was higher than that of Popes, and that it must, and could, put an end to the scandals which made Christendom seem to the Mohammedans a religious masquerade. So the twenty-nine cardinals, thirty-three archbishops, three hundred bishops and abbots, and hundred grave doctors of law and divinity solemnly invoked the light of the Holy Ghost, deposed two Anti-Popes, branded Rome's ruling Pope as "the dregs of vice and a mirror of infamy . . . . guilty of poisoning, murder, and persistent indulgence in vices of the flesh," and decided that the Church must be reformed "in head and members." They decided also, very emphatically, to suppress all heretics; and in this at least they set a good example by forthwith burning John Hus, who had the effrontery to wish to lead Christendom back to Christ.

This was just one hundred years before Father Tetzel roused the fateful ire of Father Luther by coming to sell indulgences in his district. A Reformation a century before Luther! And this Conciliar Movement, as it is called—this plan of making General Councils of bishops higher than the Popes—lasted quite a long time, and had the support of the finest scholars and prelates of Europe. Yet, curiously enough, neither the Catholic nor the Protestant writer presses the movement on your notice. The modern Catholic does not because he has discovered, eighteen centuries after the death of Christ, that the Pope is higher than a Council. And the Protestant does not because . . . . Well, let me tell you a little more about this famous Council of Constance.

During all the winter of 1414-1415 the right reverend and very reverend gentlemen were pouring over the Swiss mountains

into the little city by the Lake. They traveled, not as Paul had done, but in all the comfort that the age afforded: swaddled in heavy furs in their lumbering coaches, gay troops of horse protecting them from the ubiquitous robbers. Into the little town also poured streams of gay adventurers, entertainers, purveyors of all luxuries, from the nearest cities of Germany, France and Italy. And amongst these, the most reliable chroniclers of the time tell us, were a thousand painted ladies who came to alleviate the labors and soften the exile from their courts of the four hundred prelates and abbots and their suites.

You see how supple and accommodating a weapon in the hand of the apologist is the writing of historical facts. Omit one little detail, the gathering of the geishas at Constance—it is surely not a material part of the story of the Council—and you have an edifying account of Christendom striving to purge itself of its wantons. Tell that detail, and the reform Council begins to need a little further elucidation. And when I add that the Emperor Sigismund, who sternly commanded this gathering to reform the Church, was a flagrantly immoral and unscrupulous monarch; that the king of France was not a whit better and, like the emperor, was consulting his own pocket; and that the king of Naples, the third chief monarch involved, was poisoned by the father of one of his many mistresses while the Council was assembling, you begin to wonder whether that eccentric little man John Hus was not the only Christian amongst them. Certainly as a body those four hundred prelates and abbots, and their priest and monk retainers, shuddered at the prospect of a return to Christ.

A few years earlier that "mirror of infamy" Pope John XXIII had called a Council in St. Peter's, at Rome, to reform the Church. I have no doubt that the ex-brigand (as he was) opened the proceedings with quite a grave countenance. But an owl came out of a dark corner of the church and sat, blinking, right opposite the Pope; and he blushed as red as an Italian can blush, and closed the meeting. Roman wits, who thought the whole business a delicious comedy, said that he imagined himself confronting the Holy Ghost whom he had invoked.

You see, I do not begin my little study of the Reformation with learned and profound reflections on the political, economic, psycho-analytic, and mystic conditions of the time. We shall see presently such of these as concern us. But much of this "philosophy of history" that is now written is merely proof of the author's ability to philosophize; as we saw in regard to the causes of the Renaissance. A good solid chunk of human truth is better to get one's teeth into.

And the broad human truth here is that Europe was in a stupid and muddled condition of mind because an unnatural creed had been forced upon it, and there could not be a sound general advance

until an age of enlightenment removed the creed. The only question was whether the world would first give one more trial to the pure doctrine of Christianity, or entirely discard the creed and frame a human idealism. Was salvation to come by the Renaissance or the Reformation?

In justice to our ancestors we must avoid judging them by our modern standards. It occurred to nobody in those days to ask when, where, and by whom the Gospels were written; which was the first condition of escape from the Christian creed. To talk about the "simple piety" of our ancestors is bunk. They were duped so thoroughly and comprehensively that even a scholar did not think of asking those skeptical questions. Do not imagine that I am making bold statements which modern scholars would not sanction. It is merely the words I use that they would not sanction; and these pages are written for people who prefer a lie to be called a lie instead of a terminological inexactitude.

Most of the more learned theological authorities on the Gospels now say that words are put into the mouth of Jesus which Jesus certainly never uttered. All but Catholic scholars say this of the profoundly important supposed saying to Peter: "On this rock I will build my Church"; and even learned Catholic scholars say it of the almost equally important command (Matthew xxviii, 19) to "baptize" in the name of the Trinity. Then attention was distracted from such weaknesses as the gospel narrative obviously has by the fabrication of a supernatural version of the triumph of Christianity (the *labarum,* the discovery of the cross and Veronica's pocket handkerchief, thousands of forged legends of saints and martyrs, etc.). A number of further forgeries (Donation of Constantine, etc.) established the Pope's royal dignity, and a vast number of falsified or forged decrees of Councils proved his spiritual supremacy. There had been, on the admission of all historians, six hundred years of forgeries. The stark humanity of the Church was concealed under a purple and gold robe of supernatural favor.

In the circumstances it is remarkable how much radical anti-Christian heresy there was before the revival of learning. I must not attempt even to summarize it here. It is enough to recall that, to our positive knowledge, hundreds of thousands of men and women were killed for revolt against the ruling creed between 1200 and 1500 A. D. If we were to take the early Christians as a standard—say, in the Diocletian persecution, when a few hundred suffered for the faith and a few million abjured it—we should have to conclude that there was a colossal proportion of heresy in the Middle Ages. Remember that the total population of Europe in those days was only about thirty millions. Life was so ghastly, so ruthlessly devastated by disease and violence, that, although men and women bred like rabbits, the population was almost stationary.

However, let us be liberal and grant the apologist that the medieval heretics were much more faithful than the early Christians—or, if he prefers it, that the Christian Church was much more thorough in its bloody measures than the pagan authorities had been—so that we will not claim a thousand heretics for every one that died.

This revolt took two different lines. In part (in the Bogomiles, Albigensians, Luciferists, etc.) it was a revolt against Christian doctrine. In part (Waldensians, Lollards, Hussites, etc.) it was a revolt against the Church's corruption of Christian doctrine. But in both cases the mightiest element in the revolt was *disgust at the state of Christendom*. The corruption of the Church was the seed of heretics. Whether they said that the creed was wrong and unnatural, or that the creed was right but corrupted, they united in pointing out that the actual state of the Church repelled people of delicate spiritual nostrils.

The intellectual or doctrinal revolt was murdered. Churches are always sterner against intellectual vitality than erotic vitality—in practice. The Renaissance was not in the least a continuation of the earlier doctrinal rebellion. It was confined to the cultivated few. It was generally on good terms with the Church and as willing to burn incense to Jesus as to Apollo or any other form of thought. Where it was outspokenly anti-Christian, it was Greek: Platonist or Epicurean or Stoic. But in Greek literature were the germs of modern thought and the modern spirit.

Hence the relation of the Renaissance to the more dramatic revolt which we call the Reformation is profoundly interesting, and quite opposite opinions are expressed on it. The Reformation was in the direct line of moral revolts against the Church in the interest of pure Christianity. It continued, and it was greatly helped by, the revolts of the Wyclifites, Hussites, Christian Cathari, etc. It agreed with the Humanists in the attack on Scholastic theology and Canon Law; and the leading Humanists (Erasmus, etc.) agreed with the Reformers in denouncing the corruption of the Church. Yet, although the effects of the Renaissance remained—the act of awakening is merely the first and temporary condition of the state of being awake—the Reformers denounced the human or, as they said, pagan spirit of it, which was its finest contribution to the new era. Did the Reformation do more harm than good? Did it postpone unnecessarily the development of the modern humanitarian, libertarian, and scientific spirit?

Let us first set aside the claim of the modern Catholic that there was less to reform in the Church than is generally supposed, and that the machinery and desire of reform were in the Church, so that the Revolution, as they call it, was unnecessary. On the former point we have seen enough. The Church stank with corruption. The literature of the fifteenth century reeks with it. And the verdict of history is just as emphatic on the second point.

When the Council of Constance closed its labors, it handed to the new Pope a long list of abuses and vices which he was to correct. He bowed humbly; and he dropped the schedule into the waste-paper basket at the Vatican as soon as he got there. Every one of his successors for the next century and a half absolutely rejected the world-demand for reform. The Popes and the Curia (Papal court) became more and more vicious, as we saw, and precisely when the demand for reform was loudest and most threatening (1450-1530), the chair of Peter was occupied by entirely immoral and unscrupulous men. To the very end the Papacy bitterly resisted moral and financial reform.

Well, says the Catholic, there were other ways. There was the intellectual vitality of the Scholastic movement: which was captured and sterilized at once by the Popes, and in the sixteenth century was the archfoe of intellectual progress. There were Francis of Assissi and Dominic and the friars; and the Franciscan friars and all other monks were corrupt within fifty years of their foundation. Movements like that which Francis inaugurated were crushed by the Popes all over Europe; and Francis himself would have suffered like the others if he had had any intellect. In short, the facts of history show that no reform was possible in the Church as long as Rome retained its power.

This is the other side of the picture. Rationalists, noticing only that the Reformation interrupted the return of paganism, are apt to dismiss it with the contemptuous remark that it enthroned a book after dethroning the Pope. Protestants, who make a bogey of paganism and refuse to see that all that is best in modern times means a return to it, applaud the Reformation precisely because it put an end (they say) to the Renaissance. Against both we might plead that it is misleading to talk of the collapse of the Renaissance. A birth or re-birth does not continue; it is the thing born or re-born which continues. And a very great deal that was re-born in the fifteenth century continued. The art-movement was bound to end soon, as all great artistic periods do. The scientific movement, on the contrary, moved on, slowly but surely, to its triumph. The establishment in the schools of "humane letters" was not undone.

Still, there was a reaction, and we have to study carefully both the causes and consequences of the Reformation. To begin with, as I said, it is better to take a very broad view of the historical situation. There were three rebellions in Europe; one against the doctrines of Christianity, one against its ethic, and one against the corrupt hierarchy of the Church. The first had little chance of success in the sixteenth century. Ninety percent of the people were illiterate, and could barely understand skepticism. Erasmus and the Humanists trusted to see superstition die a natural death as knowledge grew. But it is a very serious question whether, but for the Reformation, the Papacy might not have, by some political chance,

passed to a new Innocent III, and he could have crushed the intellectual revolt.

The rebellion against the Christian ethic as such was comparatively small. The Luciferist or witch movement was the chief expression of it. Apart from this were only a few Neo-Pagans. The truth is that the Christian ethic was not taken seriously enough to inspire a revolt. The fire-insurance arrangements of the Church were so complete and generous that people used "hell" as a comfortable swear-word.

The essential condition of a successful revolt was to have a powerful organization to oppose to the Church's organization. Isolated rebels, or small bodies of rebels, were simply butchered; and the experience of the Albigensians and Waldensians showed that even a body of half a million or more members, with their own fortified cities, could not succeed. The Pope could loosen an avalanche of looters, called Crusaders, upon the rebels. Even a relatively powerful State could be attacked by the Pope arranging a coalition of other States against it.

In other words, there could be no freedom of thought in Europe until the power of the Popes was broken, and it could not be broken until the mass of the people and their rulers in several States already accepted the new ideas. And this in turn obviously means that the rebellion had to be based upon some serious practical grievance acutely felt and resented by both peoples and their rulers. The immorality of the clergy (or of Popes, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and nuns) alone would never cause such a revolt. There were not enough people with sincere moral indignation. Disdain of the hypocrisy of the clergy was more commonly expressed in ribald songs and spicy stories which were themselves indecent. The disgust of Christendom, which was to be the driving force of any successful revolt, had to be excited primarily by something more important than the amours of Popes and nuns. Fortunately, the Popes were stupid enough to give the world this grievance just at the time when political conditions made a cooperative revolt possible and a man of powerful personality appeared to incite and lead it.

WHY THE REFORMATION SUCCEEDED

To the Protestant the Reformation is from the first a sublime revolt against the moral corruption, usurped authority, and un-Christian teaching of the Roman clergy. But it is an acknowledged fact that, although Luther was at Rome in 1510, and saw with his own eyes the corrupt condition of the Curia and the clergy, he remained silent for years; and it is equally clear that in the early years of his struggle he had not the least idea of the doctrinal challenge which he afterwards formulated.

Modern historians, therefore, speak of the Reformation as a

political and religious event. I have several times referred to the incautious tendency of some of our historical writers to show their liberality by admitting some of the contentions of the Catholic writers. Naturally, no subject in the whole range of controversy has brought out so strongly the ingenuity and sophistry of Catholic writers as the Reformation, yet voluminous unscrupulous historians like Denifle ("Luther und Lutherthum"), Grisar ("Luther," 6 vols., English translation 1913), and Janssen ("History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages," 6 vols., English translation 1896-1903) have not seriously modified the traditional view of the Reformation. American Catholics have not even ventured to translate Father Denifle's "great" work; though Father Grisar's work and the article on Luther in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" (by a Doctor of Music!) are largely based on it.

Popular Catholic works on Luther and the Reformation are, as we shall see, so gross that Catholic scholars have to protest against them. The only use of the best of them is to correct the exaggeration of the religious elements of the Reformation—or the exclusion of any other elements—by popular Protestant writers. A vast amount of melodramatic rubbish has been written on both sides, and, after looking over the entire literature of the last twenty years, I cannot recommend any book. Professor Robinson's long article in the "Encyclopedia Britannica" is a fine and substantial analysis, as far as it goes, and (the Rev.) Professor Mackinnon's recent "Luther and the Reformation" (only the first volume of which is out) is a useful work on the narrow lines of a liberal theology.

The truth is that the new fashion of speaking of the Reformation as a political and religious event is not quite accurate, and it represents a concession to Catholic literary intrigue. Catholics *want* the Reformation to be put on political grounds. But the grounds of the disgust of Christendom which led to an examination of the Pope's authority and teaching, and thus brought about a doctrinal revolt, are not well described as "political." In the main they referred to two things: the Papal claim of a right to interfere in the affairs of every kingdom in the world, and the appalling Papal extortion and greed which drew vast sums of money out of every country to Italy. The grievances summarized under these heads united rulers and people, and a good many of the clergy, in a common hostile attitude toward the Roman Curia. They provided the first essential of a successful revolt. It was a religious revolt, but it started as a resentment of grievances which were not religious, yet are not aptly described as political.

The whole history of the three centuries preceding the Reformation is, as every student knows, filled with the quarrels of the Popes with various monarchs. During the whole thirteenth century Italy was rent in halves, and spattered with blood, by the

quarrel of the Guelphs and Ghibellines; which means, mainly, partisans of the Pope or the emperor. In fact, the well-known picture of the Emperor Henry IV doing penance at Canossa in the year 1076 shows the arrogance of the Popes far earlier. Gregory VII, the Pope of the time, claimed to depose monarchs, hand out crowns, and use armies, as he thought fit. His principle was ("Letters," iv, 24): "If the See of the Blessed Peter decides and judges heavenly and spiritual things, how much more shall it judge things earthly and secular?" Innocent III, the next most powerful of the Popes, had exactly the same ruling principle. Europe was to them a kind of United States and the Pope was president—without a Congress to check him.

This arrogant attitude had its foundations in the barbaric days of Europe, when the half-civilized Teuton monarchs had a superstitious awe of the Papacy, and the Popes could fabricate documents with impunity. Charlemagne's father, Pippin, was a mere usurper; but when the Pope had heard of his intention—he consulted the Pope as to the morality of it—he *ordered* Pippin to seize the throne, and Popes afterwards claimed that this made France a "fief," or feudal dependency, of Rome.

It was a Pope, moreover, who created Charlemagne "Roman Emperor" (after duping him with two of the most shameless forgeries in history). Then, in 858, came Nicholas I (in whose reign the most comprehensive and profitable of all the forgeries, the False Decretals, appeared), who expressly described himself as "prince over all the earth" ("Letters," lxv) and claimed that all kings received their swords, the symbols of their power, from the Pope.

There is an exaltation almost amounting to insanity in the letters of Nicholas, Gregory, and Innocent; and the Forged Decretals, to which Gregory VII added other forgeries, gave chapter and verse for every act of autocracy. But, with all the superstition of Europe, the autocracy was fiercely resented. An Archbishop of Cologne in the ninth century wrote as contemptuously as Luther would ever do about this Papal "emperor of all the world," and the emperor came to Rome to smoke the Pope out of his palace. But the Popes generally won, for the ignorant monarchs of the time had a terrible dread of hell-opening anathemas. Rome then passed into its hundred and fifty years of degradation, but the Puritan Popes who followed fastened their chains upon Europe more firmly than ever.

I have in my "Crises in the History of the Papacy" given a summary record of the acts of Nicholas, Gregory, and Innocent, and it is a record of the most insufferable interferences in secular matters. Many historians do not realize this and speak as if such matters as "investitures" were the chief grounds of quarrel. Bishops and archbishops were amongst the most powerful nobles of a

king in the early Middle Ages, and the monarch naturally demanded a voice in their appointment. The Popes just as naturally claimed the sole right to appoint or "invest" them. This led to a century of quarrels and ended in compromise. The exemption of the clergy from taxation was an even greater cause of friction and annoyance.

But it is quite a mistake to suppose that Popes confined their interference to matters of this kind, in which they could make out at least a plausible case. The words of Gregory VII, which I have translated from one of his letters, mean that there is no single "earthly and secular" thing on which they may not dictate if they think fit. The claim was strengthened by making countries "fiefs of the Holy See"; and this was by a series of often sordid maneuvers. Pope Alexander II gave his blessing and a Papal banner to William of Normandy when he made his quite unscrupulous raid on England, and this was later held to make England a feudal dependency of the Papacy. Pope Innocent kindly undertook to be guardian of the boy Frederick II for his simple-minded mother, and thus claimed Naples as a fief of the Holy See. On one pretext or other most countries of Europe became Papal fiefs, or subject to the Pope as feudal monarch as well as spiritual head.

The more religious the Pope, the more use he made, and often very unscrupulous use, of this power. Innocent III was a terrible offender, but I will give only one instance. He did not move a finger when King John of England murdered his nephew and he complacently rid the king of his wife, and gave him a very light penance for his new amorous adventure. But he laid an interdict on England when John resented his forcing Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury; he deposed the King (expressly as his feudal monarch), and invited Philip of France to cross the Channel and lay waste the country. When John submitted, the Pope exacted a solemn recognition of England's feudal dependency on Rome, and then, as feudal monarch, excommunicated the barons for forcing the king to sign the Magna Charta. When the barons offered the crown to the son of the French king, Innocent excommunicated the king. His interference in Germany was just as galling and even more unscrupulous.

Now the various European monarchs had become much more powerful and less docile by the sixteenth century. A very significant change in the history of Europe, which is not sufficiently noticed, is that the advisers of kings were now largely lay lawyers and nobles instead of prelates. The Pope had to treat with them as one monarch with another and forget all the talk about "fiefs." But a glance at the activity of Leo X, the Pope of Luther's day, will show how irritating the Papal claims still were.

"When you have made a league with one man," the Pope used to say, "there is no reason why you should cease to negotiate with

his opponent." Accordingly he signed a secret treaty with Spain against France, and at the same time a secret treaty with France against Spain; and a few months later secretly entered the German League against France. His aid, it is important to remember, always took the form of the funds which the Papacy wrung out of Europe. He made secret terms with the French king, then deceived both him and his other allies and tried to escape by revealing their secrets to each other. Later he again sold his secret support to France for half a million dollars, and within a fortnight secretly signed a treaty against France with Spain. This "unparalleled duplicity," as the Catholic historian Pastor calls it, was merely the last stage of Papal interference before the crash, and every monarch in Europe was profoundly disgusted. The first blast of the great storm was already raging in Germany, and the chair of Peter was occupied by a fat, lazy, and utterly unscrupulous sensualist, a man who was said in clerical circles to have boasted that his luxurious life was based upon the world's belief in "the fable of Jesus Christ."

At this point also, just when Luther had taken the war-path in Germany, the fiscal system of Rome reached its most scandalous proportions. Rome had so many sources of income that it is impossible even to summarize them here. Peter's Pence, the direct contribution of the faithful to the Pope, may be dismissed as comparatively respectable. The Papal States yielded a further income which might be deemed respectable if the Pope's title-deeds were not arrant forgeries, as all now admit, and if the maintenance of them through the ages had not meant so much bloodshed and intrigue.

Beyond that one may admit that, like the civil service, the Papal Curia had a right to recoup its clerical and administrative expenses from petitioners, but this innocent plea of payment for necessary servants had grown into a colossal and sordid system of extortion, entailing the grossest simony, or sale of sacred things.

The charges for dispensations from various disabilities alone brought a huge sum and were scandalous. For instance, the degrees of kindred which formed an impediment to marriage, without a dispensation, were extended farther and farther until one could not marry a person related within four degrees by blood or marriage or spiritual relationship. These and other impediments were deliberately fabricated in order to make money out of the dispensations. When some pious Christian expostulated with the Vice-Chancellor of Pope Innocent III—the system was already fully developed in the thirteenth century—he cynically answered: "God desired not the death of sinners, but that they should pay and live." The result was that the poor (who were related to practically everybody in their village and never got away from it) lived in "sin" and scoffed at the rich. There was no "divorce," but a large payment so sharpened the eyes of the Papal lawyers that they could discover a flaw

in, and declare null and void, any marriage of a wealthy man. "The most holy sacrament of marriage," says a Catholic writer, "was made a subject of derision to the laity by the venality with which marriages were made and unmade to fill the pouches of the episcopal officials."

This, remember, is only a single class of dispensations. There were many others, such as dispensations from onerous penances. The real quarrel of Rome with the Spanish Inquisition was about money. Even today in Spain you can buy a dispensation from nearly all the fast-days of the Church during a year for ten cents. But the two corrupt sources of revenue which were most significant in connection with the Reformation, which exasperated the clergy as well as the laity, were the sale of benefices and the sale of indulgences.

John XXII, one of the Avignon Popes, a miserly lawyer who organized the Papal finances, made a drastic beginning of what is quite properly called the sale of benefices. An earlier Pope had declared that the benefices of priests who died at Rome passed to the disposal of the Papacy. John made this a general law of the Church. When a benefice—the salaried position of priest, chaplain, abbot, bishop, etc.—fell vacant, the successor of the dead incumbent was to pay three years' revenue to Rome. Benefices (bishoprics, etc.) were multiplied by the Papacy, and candidates for the vacant office came with their offers of payment of "first fruits" just as they made offers for any other lucrative appointment.

The infamous John XXIII extended the system and gave it a quite sordid character. The Papacy had spies and an information bureau, reporting on the health of ailing or aged priests. The "expectation" of the benefice was sold to the highest bidder; and even after this a "preference" would be sold to a second man over the head of the first. The most disgusting traffic in sacred offices continued throughout Christendom for two or three centuries, but again it will suffice to take an instance from the reign of Leo X, in the days of Luther.

It will probably occur some day to an historian or medical man to inquire whether Leo X was entirely sane. There was in his time such a demand for reform, such an open scorn of the Church's corruption, that Leo had to hold a Council in Rome to consider it. He, of course, thwarted the Council. What idea of reform could there be in a man who spent, largely in personal luxury, about two million dollars a year, and surrounded himself with a court of buffoons and immoral companions? He needed vast sums of money, and he used the corrupt system of the Vatican more unscrupulously than any before. In 1514, in order to have the political support of the Elector Albert of Brandenburg, he permitted that young and licentious noble to assume the dignity of Archbishop of Mayence, and, against all Church rules, he further permitted him, for a bribe

of one hundred thousand dollars, to retain the bishoprics of Magdeburg and Halberstadt. Germany was particularly angry about the corrupt system, and Germany was treated by the Papacy as if it were a nation of helpless peasants.

Albert of Brandenburg was told that he could recoup himself out of the sale of indulgences, and this brings us to the second most corrupt source of income.

I will not linger over the word "sale." You can in Spain today get valuable indulgences, sealed and signed by the Archbishop of Toledo, who says that he has a fresh Papal authorization every year, in a shop. You pay seventy-five *centimos* (about fourteen cents). That sum is marked on the paper *(bula)*, and if you offer a quarter of a dollar you get your change just as if you had bought a cake of soap. The Church says that your money is a gift or alms to itself, and that the indulgence is a gift to you. It is the emptiest of bunk. Indulgences are *sold* in Spain today, and were in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries sold all over Europe.

The "indulgence" started as an arrangement by which a man who was condemned to an onerous penance for his sins might have it commuted for an "alms"—to the Church. In time the Popes discovered that the wonderful graces and indulgences you gained by making a pilgrimage to Rome might be gained just as well by paying to the Church the price of such a pilgrimage. From that time, the fourteenth century, indulgences were given for money-payments everywhere. The price of a pilgrimage to Rome was high, so the scale of the alms was lowered. The Church, as ever, was mindful of her poorer members; in other words, she realized that a million gifts of a dime each are worth more than a hundred gifts of twenty dollars each.

Most people are now aware that an indulgence does not mean permission to commit sin, or even absolution from sin. It means that a certain amount of punishment in Purgatory is wiped off the slate. Pope John XXIII, the Council of Constance found, actually sold absolution from sin, but that is exceptional. Still, any person who knows Catholic sentiments will understand that the indulgence encourages "sin" by making it easy to avoid the punishment (Purgatory) which the Catholic dreads most. Confession relieves him of the fear of hell at any time, but not of the penalty in Purgatory.

This traffic reached its culmination under the Popes of the Renaissance, and especially Leo X. For the maintenance of the luxury of the court and for the building of St. Peter's and other monuments colossal sums were needed. Leo X organized the sale of indulgences as if they were a new cure for indigestion. Commissaries were sent everywhere, and, flaunting the Papal banner, they cried their wares like street-salesmen. And again it was Germany, the most disaffected part of Christendom, that was most exploited.

The cup was full. Rulers, priests, and people were talking angrily or scornfully of this system which was somehow imposed upon them as part of their religion. Pamphleteers had a resounding success. And at last came the man who could prove that this was no part of Christ's religion, and that therefore Rome had apostatized from Christ.

MARTIN LUTHER

German scholars have devoted very considerable research to the condition of their country in the half-century before Luther raised the flag of revolt, and it is now known that the land was particularly ripe for insurgence against the Papacy. With their customary blindness to actualities, the Popes did not appreciate the changes which were taking place in Europe, and, proud of the strength and wealth they had recovered since their return from Avignon, they contemptuously ignored all protests except where their political or diplomatic interest was involved. Thus France had been induced to withdraw its support from the Conciliar Movement in 1438 and had been granted a liberal arrangement with the Papacy (in the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges). England and Spain had come to terms at an earlier date, and Italy, where Marsiglio of Padua had published a virulent attack on the Papacy as early as 1324 ("Defensor Pacis"), was, as usual, cowed into subjection.

The German emperor had ostensibly got a favorable Concordat with the Papacy in 1448, but it left the principal sources of friction unsettled, and there were loud and constant complaints of Papal greed. The excuse was now made that to increase the extortion large funds were needed for a campaign against the Turks; yet Christendom presently learned with horror that Popes Innocent VIII and Alexander VI accepted one hundred thousand dollars a year from the Sultan to keep his younger brother a captive at the Vatican, and that Alexander VI offered to prevent a war against the Sultan if the money was paid. Complaints were formulated at every meeting of the German Diets, and it was particularly emphasized that the fine folk at the Vatican treated the Germans as "slaves," "barbarians," and "beer-swillers," and contemptuously refused to hear them. For a time there was a renewed demand for a General Council, but Pius II decreed that such an appeal was an infringement of Papal rights, and the Germans had to be content with venting their anger.

The new circumstances which escaped the notice of the Popes were the rapid growth of the feeling of nationality in Germany, the kindling of some spirit amongst the peasantry themselves after the abolition of serfdom, the dissemination of the ideas of the Humanists, and eventually the invention of printing. Very extensive agitations amongst the peasants already existed in the fifteenth

century, and peasant orators, who had immense influence, were not slow to point out how the people were exploited by the clergy.

By the middle of the century there were scores of printing presses in Germany, and, scanty as education was, the new invention was in controversy something like what the invention of gunpowder was in warfare. There was in the second half of the fifteenth century a sort of religious revival in Germany: a purification and deepening of religious sentiment which tended to concentrate attention on the words and spirit of Christ. Editions of the Bible poured from the press, and a thousand could now consult the actual words of Christ for one who could have done so fifty years earlier. Luther seems to have exaggerated, from imperfect recollection, when he said in later years that he was almost the only monk of his body to read the Bible. In the seventy years before the revolt of Luther about two hundred editions (total or partial) of the Bible were printed in European languages, and eighteen of these were in German; and there were some five or six hundred editions in Latin.

Another formidable weapon provided by the German press was the literature of the Humanists. Erasmus, as we saw, quitted his native Netherlands, where Spain and the Inquisition ruled, and ultimately settled in Germany. Reuchlin, an older and more orthodox Humanist, had to some extent prepared the way for him, but the brilliant and dissipated young poet Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523) hit the popular taste even more effectively than the broad passages in the "Colloquies" of Erasmus. Ex-monk himself, he had ample material for controversy, and his courage was equal to his wit. He printed in Germany Lorenza Valla's exposure of the fraudulent bases of the Pope's temporal power (the Donation of Constantine), and in conjunction with another German writer he issued a work, "The Letters of Obscure Men," in which he held up to ridicule the orthodox monks who defended the Papacy, by assigning to them letters that combined orthodoxy and stupidity in equal proportions. The anger of Germany thus assumed at times the more dangerous form of laughter. Scores of pamphlets circulated deriding the Papacy and the clergy.

At the height of this movement Leo X, as I said, gave Germany a most cynical proof of his contempt for their claims. Men already murmured that the archbishopric of Mayence had been vacant seven times in one generation, and that the price which the Papacy demanded for appointment to it was raised from ten thousand to twenty thousand gulden. Then Leo sold it to the quite unworthy Elector, Albert of Brandenburg, who merely desired its revenues, and in addition permitted him, for a large consideration, to keep two other episcopal sees. Albert was, as we saw, to recover part of his payment by a share in the proceeds of the sale of indulgences,

and it is here that the Dominican monk Tetzel and the Augustinian monk Martin Luther enter the story.

Few characters in history have been so venomously libeled and so unscrupulously glorified as Martin Luther. To the uncultivated Protestant he is, after Jesus and Paul, the third founder of pure Christianity: a man purified and ennobled by the spiritual flame that burned in him and removed from him every human defilement. To the Catholic he is an instrument of the devil: a coarse and fierce sensualist, a man whose very breath was foul with obscenities, a fool who for the tickling of his vanity and the gratification of his passions perjured his soul and fabricated a charge against the Church. Yet no character that has thus been painted by rival love and hatred in fantastically exaggerated colors is more easy to appreciate.

Catholic literature even in our own day, when it affects an air of liberality, is stupid in its exaggerations. Professor Mackinnon quotes a work by a German Catholic (Merkle's "Reformationsgeschichtliche Streitfragen," 1904) which I have not been able to see, and tells us that it contains a "crushing exposure" of the Catholic Baron von Berlichingen's "Luther and the Reformation." But a good idea of the stupid tradition may be obtained from the American work "The Facts About Luther" by the Rev. Mgr. Dr. P. O'Hare. From such a very reverend and learned-looking author the Catholic expects the very truth, and is assured by a professor of the Catholic University at Washington (the Rev. Prof. Dr. Guilday), who writes the preface, that he gets it.

The book is a quite sordid piece of deceit. The reverend professor first tickles the appetite of the reader by announcing "scenes of coarseness, vulgarity, *obscenity and degrading immorality.*" That is Catholic university culture in America. Even the writer on Luther in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" ignores this libel in his authorities, and, instead of immorality, speaks only of "unsurpassable and irreproducible coarseness." But Father O'Hare reproduces this for us. He opens his book with the constructive lie that "learned and distinguished historians like Janssen, Denifle, and Grisar, and many others" have "painted with masterly accuracy the real picture of the reformer." He conceals from his Catholic readers the fact that Denifle and Grisar are just Church-serving priests like himself, and that the "many others" have a profound contempt for their lies about Luther.

Then he discovers that even unscrupulous hatred can invent no calumny about Luther as a student, monk and professor, so he fills his book with dreary discussions of doctrine and untruthful defenses of the faith. We saw, for instance, that the last straw laid upon the back of Germany was Leo X's cynical deal with Albert of Brandenburg. Albert's purchase of the archbishopric is actually defended, his character is not mentioned, and not a word is said

about the Pope permitting him, for a corrupt bribe, to retain two other bishoprics.

However, in the last chapter we reach the "obscenities" promised us by the introducing professors. Luther's immorality, the priest assures us, is vouched for by numbers of witnesses; and the only one he quotes is a bitter Catholic opponent of the Reformer who makes a vague general charge. On the strength of this, and some of the passages in which Luther satirizes clerical celibacy and bluntly tells monks and nuns to go and get married, we get the quite childish assurance that "to deify indecency" was part of Luther's "satanic desire and diabolical purpose." This sort of melodramatic mouthing is what the American Catholic reads as a summary of "learned and distinguished historians." From refined Father Grisar the refined Father O'Hare even reproduces the very delicate suggestion that Luther had syphilis . . . . One almost regrets that the kind of blunt and forceful language which he quotes from Luther has gone out of fashion, and that one has now, more politely, to describe this kind of literature as the dung of obese Jesuits and the dollar-catching drivel of lick-spittle servants of the Pope.

There is no dispute about the fact that Luther was a profoundly religious man: that is to say, a man of, not only the firmest belief in Christianity, but of exceptionally strong religious sentiment. In his "Table-Talk" he describes adultery as "a crime most odious . . . . a crime at once against God, against society, and against one's family." And, as against Dr. O'Hare's repeated statement that he glorified sexual intercourse and ridiculed the idea that a man or woman could remain virginal, we have his advice, in insisting on purity, to the preacher of the gospel: "Is he able, with a good conscience to remain unmarried? Let him so remain." Luther was a man of strong sensuality. His temperament was peculiar in this that he united an acute nervous sensibility and explosiveness with the eupeptic blood-circulation that usually goes with placid nerves. He therefore felt acutely the conflict of his "flesh" and the contempt of his creed for the flesh, but he was too sincere in his faith to assuage the conflict by a compromise between the two, or by devoting a Saturday to the one and a Sunday to the other. It is impossible to say exactly why he became a monk, but I agree with Professor Mackinnon that an explanation given by himself in later years is the correct one: that in a dangerous thunder-storm he vowed to enter a monastery if his life was spared.

The Augustinian monastery he entered was not lax, and the fierce conflict of flesh and faith tormented his early manhood, in spite of his admitted austerities. He brooded morbidly for years on what Paul calls, in the Latin Bible, the "justice" of God. It suggested a Rhadamanthus of a judge, particularly in regard to the innocent physiological movements which the Christian calls "bad

thoughts." How could a man like himself, with so many "bad thoughts," hope to escape this searching and fiercely punishing judge? And it is admitted by all that this terrible stress ended, long before he had any idea of a breach with Rome, in a discovery that there was a mistranslation of the Greek text of Paul. He had spoken of God's "righteousness," not "justice," and a perfect confidence in God would infallibly bring whatever "grace" was necessary for "salvation."

These things do not of themselves interest us today. Even the normal Protestant or Catholic does not now go home, after glimpses of the upper regions of silk stockings on the screen or of bare limbs in a revue or a vaudeville, to tear the sheets and wet the pillow with tears. But Luther's struggle and the solution of it while he was still a monk are part of the essential history of the Reformation. It was evolving in Luther's mind as inevitably as events were moving toward it in the world at large; but without those outward events we should never have heard of Martin Luther. He had no instinct of rebellion. In 1510 he visited Rome on business of his Augustinian Order, and after seeing all its corruption, he went back meekly to his cell. He was not of heroic stuff. Son of a miner, he had in early manhood a great sympathy with the oppressed poor and spoke scornfully of their lords and exploiters; but when the peasants rebelled and appealed for his aid, he—not unmindful that if princes deserted the Reformation, it was certainly ruined—harshly exhorted the masters to treat them as "mad dogs" and shoot them.

The career of such a man naturally has weaknesses, but the only one worth serious notice is his fiery temper and coarseness of language. He was, as I said, of an explosive nervous temperament, and to say that he often in the trying circumstances of his struggle flew into a rage is merely to say that he was not a "saint." The coarseness of his language at times—his "Table-Talk" generally reads as soporifically as Marcus Aurelius—cannot be lightly set aside as explained by the lowliness of his home or the general coarseness of the Middle Ages; though, if we had the same extensive and intimate knowledge of some even of the bishops and nobles of the time, we might find them using the same language. Luther, indeed, might have argued, if any person had objected to his fluent scattering of "asses" and "swine," that Jesus himself was pretty free with expletives like "brood of vipers," and so on. In short, Luther was not and never professed to be, a meek saint or an anemic apostle of gentleness. He did not see that Christianity obliged him to say "woman of ill fame" (with a blush) instead of "whore." For any serious historical purpose his "coarseness" is as immaterial as the size of his boots.

Luther was teaching at Wittenberg University when, toward the close of 1517, the Dominican monk, Father Tetzel, came to

Jüterbog, a few miles away, to sell indulgences. Tetzel's character no more matters than the robustness of Luther's language. He was specially chosen by the Pope as chief indulgence-monger because he had an effective way of getting money. This way consisted in his loud and picturesque appraisal of the value of the indulgences. Wittenberg was only three miles away, and people went over to hear this medieval Billy Sunday and talked about him. Luther had long ago concluded that salvation was a very difficult business, and one could make sure of it only by personal union with and reliance on God. From every point of view the Tetzel business honestly disgusted him. It released people from reliance on "grace" and encouraged them to rely on bits of money and ceremonies. It encouraged vice by indicating a very easy way of evading payment for it. And the money went to a corrupt hierarchy, and Purgatory was not in the Bible or the Fathers, so . . . . As the issue of his reflections, Luther drew up ninety-five propositions about Purgatory and indulgences, and nailed his paper, on the eve of the feast of All Saints, to the door of the Castle Church, which was used as a sort of notice board.

This was not the beginning of the Reformation. It was one Catholic disputing with another Catholic as to whether some point not defined by the Church could or could not be held. But there was the germ of revolution in it, because the Popes had for two centuries drawn vast funds from the sale of indulgences, and this was based essentially on the doctrine of Purgatory. Luther cannot have dreamed that Rome would tolerate his denial. He can only have supposed that Rome, nearly a thousand miles away, would never hear of his proposed battle of wits with Tetzel. Probably, indeed, he never thought about Rome, but only of Tetzel. From his pulpit in Wittenberg he roared invectives across the three miles of space to Jüterbog.

The bishop sent a copy of Luther's ninety-five theses to Rome. He smelt sulphur, but a professor at the university was a professor. A Dominican monk in Rome replied to the theses, and, in fact, the Dominican monks, the "dogs of the Lord," the ready tools of the Popes at that time in searching out wealthy heretics and in selling indulgences, informed the Vatican that Luther was spoiling business in his part of Germany. The emperor also was induced to denounce Luther. He was summoned to Rome; and he was probably reminded of the little poem, if it already existed in some shape, about the spider and the fly. Through the influence of his patron, the Elector of Saxony, he was excused from going to Rome, and ordered to present himself before the Papal Legate at Augsburg in 1518.

Pope Leo sent his ablest Legate, Cardinal Cajetan, for he wanted money. But the Diet listened somberly to the cardinal's description of the menace of the Turk, and, in fine, refused the money

and drew up afresh a long list of their grievances against Rome. It was in this atmosphere that Luther boldly refused to retract and appealed to a general Council. This was not new or revolutionary. A great many people, especially in Germany, had held for a century that a General Council was higher than the Pope, and, on such a theory, it could not matter that the Pope said otherwise.

Luther returned unmolested to Wittenberg, and no further step was taken for two years. But the work went on mightily. People were now reading Erasmus and laughing over Ulrich von Hutten's "Letters of Obscure Men." More pious folk were reading spiritual books which brought them back, like Luther, to Paul and the New Testament. Luther's theses were printed, in Latin and German, and widely discussed. This learned professor, it seemed, maintained that the Papacy had definitely admitted as Christian truth a human invention. On top of it all came the political news that the Diet had buttoned up the German people's pockets against the Pope. The general frame of mind was one of hostility to Rome within the limits of the faith. But if anyone were now to prove that this faith imposed by the Popes was adulterated in their own interest . . . . The prairie was very ready for a spark.

The spark fell, and the Reformation began, when Luther in 1520 published the results of his two years reflections. He had compared the Scholastic theology (about which he had long been uneasy) and the Canon Law with the real Christian faith as given in the New Testament and the Fathers. He issued two pamphlets (and a third which does not matter here). The first, an "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation," reminded secular rulers how much they paid for the pomp and luxury of Rome, and informed them that they had a perfect right to reform the Church; that the Pope's sharp distinction between spiritual and temporal power was an invention. The second pamphlet, "The Babylonish Captivity of the Church," said that the Christian truth was that men must rely on God's grace, not ceremonies; that four of the Church's seven sacraments were inventions; and so on. A Papal bull was hurled at the monk; and he gave the Reformation its third and final foundation when, on December 10th, he, in the presence of students, professors, and townsfolk, burned Pope Leo's bull at the gate of Wittenburg, amidst general applause.

Luther was still far more Catholic than Wyclif or Hus had been. His idea merely was that the Papal system should be sheared by a General Council, convoked by secular rulers, of certain doctrines and practices not contained in the writings of the Fathers. But this was to attack the basic principle of the system, the authority of the Pope; and it was, on the other hand, the very note which Germany required to give a definite direction to its vague dissatisfaction. At the same time a certain Jacques Lefèvre was

preaching a somewhat similar gospel, and bringing men back to the Bible, in France, and Zwingli, the favorite preacher of Zurich, was denouncing indulgences in that city.

The next move was with "the assassins," and the orthodox young emperor, Charles V, summoned Luther to appear before the Diet at Worms (1621) and condemned him. He and the Diet reaffirmed all their grievances against Rome, and demanded a General Council, but he had not the least sympathy with an eccentric monk who burned Papal bulls. Luther was a "notorious and stiff-necked heretic," and his writings were "foul and harmful." Strong in the loud manifestations of popular support everywhere, Luther had refused to recant, but the combination of Church and State against him was irresistible. He might have ended as Hus and Savonarola had ended, and the Reformation been postponed to another age, had not the friendly Elector of Saxony arranged a little plot for his safety. He was seized as he traveled from Worms and lodged in the ancient castle of the Wartburg. There, disguised as a knight, he turned to the translation of the Bible, awaiting some new turn of events. And the turn, the critical historical fact which facilitated the Reformation, was that the fiery ambition of the young emperor now drove him abroad for some years in the military enforcement of his rights, and the minor princes of Germany were left free to consider, and in some cases adopt and encourage, the new anti-Papal theories.

THE CATHOLIC REFORMATION

The German Emperor Charles was, though no model of chastity, an orthodox believer; but we do not need a prolonged search to find the usual very human elements in any spiritual triumph of Leo X. The emperor was embarking upon a serious campaign against France, and he wanted, and received a promise of, Papal support. So he branded Luther a heretic, and Leo felt that he could now force the Elector of Saxony to surrender Luther to the mercies of the Inquisition. But Leo himself died before the end of the year, and he was succeeded by Hadrian VI.

Quite certainly Hadrian wanted reform, and there were many clerics in Rome who saw that reform was urgently needed to save the Papacy. But the luxurious and vicious cardinals appointed by Leo and his predecessors ruled the Palace, and they smiled at the piety of this son of the working class who had strangely found his way among them. Hadrian himself, in fact, did not propose to do more than modify the abominable traffic in spiritual things. He died, utterly distracted, within two years, and the Papacy again fell to a member of the great Medici house.

Clement VII was not vicious, but he was weak and he was, like his predecessors, immersed in politics and in the interests of his

relatives. Catholic writers claim under his pontificate the first evidence that the Church could and would reform itself, and even so cautious an historian as Professor Robinson says that the Legate Campeggio, acting on the Pope's instructions, "met the long-standing and general demand for reform without a revolution in doctrines or institutions." The truth is that the Catholic princes themselves, whom Campeggio was to combine in a League against Luther's supporters, compelled the Pope to make some show of reform, and what was done was of the most meager description.

The pontificate of Clement VII precisely shows the utter unwillingness or incapacity of the Church to reform itself. The Lutheran princes formed a powerful League to protect the heresy. In Switzerland city after city officially adopted the rebellion. Gustavus Vasa adopted Lutheranism in Sweden, and it made great progress in Denmark. And, most formidable of all, Henry VIII had severed his own State and Church from the Vatican, and the Reformers were making dangerous progress in France. The revolution was sweeping Europe. Yet this representative of the more luxurious members of the Sacred College, confronting the most terrible disaster that the Pope had ever imagined, spent his life in promoting the interests of his family by political intrigue and at the most made a few tactical and entirely useless concessions to a local demand.

That the Church was neither willing nor able to reform itself is even more clearly proved by the pontificate of Alexander VI. When the Medicean Pope Clement died in the year 1534 the Reformation was almost established. The one hope now for the Vatican was that by a drastic purification of the morals of the higher clergy and a complete reform of its fiscal system it might unite the Catholic princes in a zeal for the faith and win back a large body of the people. Most of the German princes held firm for the faith, and they waited only for a General Council to reform the Church and settle points of doctrine before they set out to coerce the minority. There was still a possibility of at least confining the schism to a few countries or provinces on the fringe of Europe.

In this solemn hour the frivolous cardinals who met at Rome to elect a Pope, and cynically implored the light of the Holy Ghost, chose Cardinal Alessandro Farnese to wear the tiara and control the destinies of the Church. A more stupid and irritating choice it would be difficult to imagine. He had been known in the Church for more than twenty years as "the petticoat cardinal." No one in Europe was ignorant that he owed his high position to the fact that his fifteen-year-old sister, Giulia Farnese, had been the mistress of Alexander VI, and that as a cardinal he had had a regular mistress, besides his occasional amours, who bore him four children in his cardinalitial palace. At the very time of his election his son,

Pier Luigi, and his daughter, Costanza, were well-known figures in Roman society, and, instead of retiring into a decent obscurity, they came out boldly to enjoy the new wealth and prestige of their Papa. Two boy nephews also, one seventeen and the other fourteen years old, were at once promoted to the cardinalate and enriched with lucrative ecclesiastical benefices; and both of these cardinals became as immoral as the rest of the noble Farnese family.

Paul III was, as Pope, a man of virtue; he was nearly seventy years old when he was elected. But, although, there were assuredly now many cardinals who wanted reform—it is a miracle of stupidity that any did not—the very fact that Paul III was elected shows that the Papal court as a body was still corrupt. Its attitude is quite clear. Paul III was reputed to be a very able diplomatist, and he was to meet the demands of Europe for reform with all the astuteness in words that he could command, yet yield not one inch except under severe pressure.

And that is precisely what was done even at the height of the storm in Europe. Paul announced that a General Council would be held to reform the Church and settle questions of doctrine. It was three years after his accession when he fixed the date and place of the Council, and, as it was to be held in Italy under the control of his Legates, even the Catholic monarchs would have nothing to do with it. Paul was determined not to yield, and he wasted another year and then announced a Council at Vicenza: again in an Italian town, which both Catholic and Protestant princes refused to sanction, and under Papal auspices. When Paul's three Legates made a pompous entry into Vicenza at the appointed time, they found only five bishops there, and they ignominiously retired to Rome.

Many historians believe that Paul had not the least desire to hold a Council. I should say that he was certainly willing to hold a Council in Italy, under his own control, but he had only the faintest hope of inducing even the Catholic monarchs to agree to it, and he relied entirely on his diplomatic ability to bring about a union of Catholic princes and then organize a massacre of Protestants on the largest scale. Meantime, he had a reform-commission at work in the Vatican, and, although he gave the reform cardinals to understand that they must be prudent and moderate, they in 1537 presented him with a very ugly document, a list of the reforms which the Church must make "from within." It is enough to say that the document was shelved in the Papal Archives, where it remains today.

One office of the Vatican establishment was selected for reform, and the discussion of this lasted three further years. It was not until 1540, nearly twenty years after Luther had burned the Pope's bull, that any reforms, a few minor reforms, were carried

out. One instance will show the real value of these, however edifying they may seem in schedule. One of the grave abuses was that priests obtained lucrative clerical positions far away from Rome, and then lived a luxurious life in Rome on the income. This scandal at least must end, said the reform cardinals, and the Pope resigned himself to sacrifice eighty notorious offenders. They tearfully pointed out . . . . In short, they all remained in Rome.

It is of interest to the modern reader to know that the Popes and cardinals were not the only offenders in the Church. It was, above all, the German Emperor who pressed for a General Council, so that he might unite and pacify his distracted empire, and the French king and many of the subsidiary German princes felt that it was very much against their own interest to see the emperor recover his full power. Priests and laymen, in other words, were equally lax in regard to a "reform from within." All that Rome—apart from the minority of reformers—wanted was a Council which should satisfy the emperor that the followers of Luther were formal heretics, and he might unsheathe the sword. But the emperor wanted a Council at which the Lutherans would assist in the discussion of doctrine and thus afford some chance of a pacific settlement. For this, he knew, reform of morals and finance was essential; and Rome preferred its traditional device of bloody suppression.

In 1541 the Pope met the emperor and was forced to act. A Council should be held, as soon as possible, at Trent, in the emperor's dominions. It is enough to say that when Paul's Legates arrived there, with the usual pomp, and after allowing three weeks for the gathering of the prelates, not a single bishop had come! No one believed in the Pope's intentions. At that solemn hour of Papal history he was enriching his family and parading his illegitimate offspring. When the emperor heard that the Pope had, with incredible levity, just given his granddaughter (daughter of his illegitimate daughter) two duchies of the Papal States as a dowry, he threatened to invade Rome and depose the libertine.

These are undisputed historical facts. These are the prosy statements you will find in any history of the time. Instead of the Church—either Popes, cardinals, or prelates—being willing and able to reform themselves, they evaded every attempt of the laity for forty years, in fact for a hundred and thirty years (counting from the Council of Constance), to impose reform on them. When the Council of Trent was at last announced, in 1545, there were only two bishops present when the Pope's Legates arrived. The purpose of the Pope was notorious. At the very time when he announced his grand plan of reform, he issued new coins in Rome on which there was a naked figure of Ganymede watering the Farnese lily! Secretly, as we now know, Paul was sending funds to Germany

for a war on the heretics which would make the Council superfluous. So to the end of his life he resisted reform and relied on the sword. His successor, Julius III, suspended the labors of the Council of Trent and proved even more frivolous than Paul. It was only when Protestantism was fully established that some measure of reform became inevitable; and the sale of indulgences in Spain to this day is a sufficient proof that it was based on policy, not principle. The Church was reformed where, and in so far as, compulsion existed.

HUMANITY CRUCIFIED FOR CHRIST

It remains to tell how Rome now failed to drown the new heresy in blood, as it had drowned previous revolts, and how in its effort to do so it crucified humanity anew. It may be said in a word that the new religion triumphed for the same reason that Christianity had triumphed in the fourth century: it won the favor of secular princes. The Protestant who seeks a divine intervention in the affairs of the world in the sixteenth century is just as eccentric as the Catholic who holds that his Church enjoyed a divine guidance throughout the nightmare of the early Middle Ages and the corruption of the later. Religious ideas prevailed, like political ideas, when the sword of the soldier enforced or protected them.

Luther, branded a heretic by the emperor at the instigation of the Papal Legate, was in hiding in the Wartburg fortress. His great hymn, "Our God Is a Strong Fort," is not without irony. The Wartburg and the soldiers of the Elector had to represent God to him for the time being. But—here the zealous Protestant might discern the hand of God—the greed and ambition of the young emperor drove him to military fields abroad for several years, and the governing council which he left in Germany proved feeble and futile. The new ideas spread rapidly, and several men of power were won to them. The city of Wittenberg officially embraced some of the new ideas, modifying the mass, abolishing fasts, and pooling Church property; and Luther was encouraged to return.

The new Pope, Hadrian VI, wanted reform, as I said, but could not achieve it. Through his Legate at the Diet of Nuremberg in 1523 he admitted the corruption of the Church, yet he demanded the enforcement of the edict against Luther. The Diet refused to persecute, demanded a General Council, and enjoined on Luther merely to refrain from further controversy until the Council was held. One might as well tell a fire to burn no further. The Reformation swept on. To the Diet of Spires in 1524 the Pope sent his ablest Legate, Campeggio, and promised reform. Now the Diet promised to enforce the coercive decree, but it was too late to do so, and the opposing forces secretly organized. The Pope's representative formed a Catholic League of the Duke of Austria, the

two Dukes of Bavaria, and a few others—incidentally assigning to each, on the Pope's instructions, a large bribe out of Church funds —and the Elector of Saxony, the Margrave of Hesse, and others formed a league to protect the reformers. The Swiss cities were now adopting the ideas of Zwingli, and an attempt was made to unite the German and Swiss reformers, but Luther and Zwingli, who met in 1529, could not agree. The Swiss cities combined separately to protect their reformed religion.

In the same year, 1529, the Diet of Spires received orders from the emperor, who was still abroad, to enforce the Worms decree against the innovators. Here it was that the Lutheran minority of the Diet made the famous "Protest" which made them henceforth the Protesters or Protestants.

In 1530 the Emperor Charles returned, and the moment of crisis seemed to have arrived. He summoned a Diet at Augsburg, inviting the Protestants to formulate their views, and they did so in the Augsburg Confessions. To this document, rejecting auricular confession, the mass, clerical celibacy, and monastic vows, the majority replied by a decree that if the Protestants did not voluntarily submit by a certain date the truth would be enforced upon them in the traditional way of those pious times. But the Confession had the signatures of the Elector of Saxony (the Constantine of Protestantism), Philip of Hesse, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the Dukes of Lüneburg, and the representatives of various cities, and, when they left the Diet and formed the Schmalkaldic League, the odor of gunpowder restrained the zeal of the orthodox. The period of grace was extended. The emperor was busy with his personal ambitions, the Turks were threatening Christendom, and the Catholic princes were not too eager to see the emperor triumph. It is not for a very profane historian like myself to say if God arranged these things.

Meantime, as I said, Lutheranism conquered Denmark and Scandinavia, and the strange spectacle was seen in Paris, in 1528, of his Most Catholic Majesty inviting the reformers to set forth their ideas in his palace, through the mouth of a zealous young man named Cauvin, or Calvin, of whom the world would hear much. The king's sister favored the new ideas. The Sorbonne was deeply infected with them. But Calvin had to fly to Geneva, where he persuaded the Swiss to exchange the less irrational views of Zwingli for his own dreary and ferocious predestinationism; which soon showed its human value in the horrible outrage of the burning of the brilliant young Spaniard, Servetus, because his views of religion were two centuries more enlightened than those of John Calvin.

Meantime, also, Henry VIII of England had been inspired by his "lust" and by the Papal control of his appetites to reflect in his turn on the bases of the Pope's power. The superficial Catholic

view which represents the Reformation in England as merely an expression of the perversity of Henry VIII ought to be resented by Catholic readers as an insult to their intelligence. Long before Henry's time more than one-tenth of England had embraced the even more radical Protestantism of Wyclif, and the grounds of that heresy remained: the actual teaching of Christ in the Gospels on the one hand, and the elaborate mythology and corrupt practices of the Church on the other. All Europe was ready for a reform, and was prevented from embracing it only by the use of force. Long before the question of Henry's divorce arose, the learned Dean of St. Paul's Colet, was preaching a kind of Protestantism and had many supporters.

But, however we may smile at the character of the man who in 1533 displaced the Pope ("the petticoat cardinal") as the head of the Church of England, we can quite easily see how he could reach his conclusion in sincerity. The English kings had long refused to recognize Papal supremacy in the form in which the Popes demanded a recognition of it, and royal advisers like Cranmer, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1532, had studied the Lutheran ideas at Cambridge and in Germany. To look for ambitions and lusts at the roots of the English Reformation is to the modern mind amusing. The contrast of Christ's teaching and the teaching and practice of Rome was so glaring that, no matter what *occasioned* a man to reflect on it, he could hardly be other than sincere in saying that he perceived it.

It is much easier to understand than a case in recent times of a Protestant English princess discovering, just when the Spanish royal crown was dangled before her eyes, that the mythology of the Spanish Church is much nearer to the teaching of Christ than the comparatively respectable tenets and practices of the Church of England; and every Catholic in the world warmly approved the "conversion" and subsequent marriage to the king of Spain of that English princess.

I need not, therefore, follow the details of the English Reformation. To most of us moderns the only difficulty is to understand how it took men so long to realize the rottenness and untruthfulness of the bases of the Papal claim; for little beyond that was rejected in the early days of the Reformation. England remained Catholic, and the Bishop of Rome was told to confine himself to his own ill-regulated diocese. But the discovery of one Papal fraud was bound to lead to the discovery of others, and presently the maggots were ejected from the comfort of the monastic cheese, the mummery of the mass was seen to be a burlesque of Christ's last supper, the confessional was easily recognized as an invention of medieval priestcraft, and so on.

Protestantism in every country ran its inevitable course. Lu-

ther died, and the Council of Trent began its labors, in 1546. The schism was now a formal and powerful heresy, and Pope Paul III egged on the emperor and the Catholic princes to a crusade. Paul secretly promised the emperor one hundred thousand ducats out of the Papal treasury, twelve thousand soldiers in Papal pay, half a year of the revenue of the Spanish Church and five hundred thousand ducats' worth of monastic property—the confiscation of which in England so profoundly shocked the Pope. Charles was at length brought or driven to the conclusion of a secret treaty with the Pope and the Catholic princes to make "war" on his Protestants. Again he hesitated for a moment when he learned that the Pope, to precipitate matters, had treacherously betrayed this plot to the Protestants themselves and had invited other Catholic monarchs to join the "crusade" and thus diminish the glory of the vain monarch. Charles inflicted some defeats on the Protestants, and then bitterly disappointed and angered the Pope by granting the Interim, a temporary peace and compromise between the two parties. The treaty of Augsburg in 1555 then promised mutual toleration and liberty.

But a new "religious" farce, the Jesuits, now appeared, and the Court at Rome was purified of its paganism and the inevitable issue was—war, massacres, burnings, hangings, disembowelings. The civilization of Europe, which had begun to advance again, was once more put back a hundred years. France checked its Protestants by the most horrible outrage that stains its chronicles, the St. Bartholomew Massacre (1572), over which the Pope sang a *Te Deum*, and by the war against the Huguenots. England stank with the burning flesh of "martyrs" on both sides. In the little Netherlands Catholic Spain's "butcher's bill" amounted to more than a hundred thousand men and women. Germany, or the whole central part of Europe, remained a charnel-house for decades. Bohemia, the main battlefield, and until then a most promising civilization, had its thirty thousand prosperous villages reduced to six thousand, its three million enlightened citizens reduced to seven hundred and eighty thousand beggars. The plague, supervening upon the impoverished people, carried off a further hundred thousand.

So the glorious Reformation and the now "reformed" Church of Rome crucified humanity afresh. The same fierce intolerance remained on both sides. The human interests of man were despised on both sides. The new culture, which had initiated and symbolized the awakening of civilization, was dreaded by both sides. Protestantism had the lean fanatic's hatred of art: Catholicism prostituted it and ruined its inspiration. Eyes bloodshot with hatred glared across streets and frontiers at each other. . . . You would tell me that God and Christ were looking down on this new and unprecedented massacre and debauchment of men in their name! "The only excuse for God is that he does not exist."

But humanity had new germs of mental vitality in it which could never again be destroyed. Even in the religious field Anabaptists and Socinians appeared. Presently Deism would inaugurate the final development. Science found laboratories where Popes and their Inquisitors dare no longer intrude their noses. I am disposed to welcome the Reformation: not indeed the narrow theology, the dreary worship, the ferocious orthodoxy, which some would perpetuate in the world, but the effect on Rome. It proved that the new tyranny of a book had no approach to the tyranny of the Pope. The race began to speculate. A great lesson in rebellion had been taught. The progress of the world consists in learning lessons of rebellion. The Catholic sneers at the "Protestant Revolution." He gives us the measure of his own fatuity.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Truth About Galileo and Medieval Science

Science and Christianity—Roger Bacon and His Age—
Copernicus and Galileo—The Reformation and Science

Science and Christianity

SCIENCE is simply the Latin word for knowledge. A good deal of ingenuity has been expended in making definitions of science which represent it as knowledge acquired by special methods. It is not. Science is just a knowledge of things that really exist; and, since there can be no knowledge of things which do not exist, science is just knowledge. Every other branch of knowledge or supposed knowledge now recognizes this by anxiously claiming that it is "a science."

Theology is, for all its industry, not a science. There is no theology, but there are fifty theologies. They are so many groups of entirely contradictory speculations as to the meaning of words very doubtfully attributed to men of the past who may never have existed; and the words refer to what no one can prove to be realities. There is no science of God, because God is a name for fifty different and contradictory conceptions. Of any ten masters of the art of thinking, in science or in philosophy, at least five say that the existence of any God is unproven, and the other five flatly contradict each other about the nature of the being they claim to exist.

There is no science of the soul, for since psychology (the "science of the soul") began to acquire knowledge in the only way which leads to agreed and verifiable results—by direct observation of realities or by strictly logical inferences from observed realities —it has abandoned the idea of a soul. It is now the knowledge of mental acts or states or behavior. Philosophy is not a science, but a contradictory series of collections of contradictory speculations which cannot be called knowledge. History is now, and claims to be, a science. It is knowledge of past events acquired by inference from observed phenomena: written statements and ancient remains. "Exact science" is an absurdity. There is no inexact science or inexact knowledge.

So stupendous a mass of real knowledge has been acquired during the last hundred years by what was called the scientific method, and so much that was called knowledge has been by the

same method discredited, that the word "scientific" is now as eagerly claimed as was once "royal" or "religious." Charlatans call their frauds Christian Science or Psychic Science. Biblical critics claim to have a science. Businessmen, and even politicians and gamblers, claim to be scientific. Literary and artistic critics say that they are scientific.

The reasons for the popularity of the word are well known. First, somehow the use of what was called the scientific method led to the attainment of an immense volume of knowledge on which all trained thinkers could agree. They had never agreed before, in theology or philosophy, except in so far as authority compelled them. Secondly, this new knowledge at once flowered in myriads of inventions which made the world immeasurably better to live in than it had ever been before. As we have amply seen, religion had given men neither the solid truth nor the moral power it pretended to give. Science at once gave men an immense mass of solid undisputed truths and a power which is rapidly transforming the face of the earth and will in time transform man himself.

So the world ignores the petty groups of mystics and anti-vivisectionists who sneer at science, and the philosophers and theologians who claim to be superior to it. Science is knowledge. The mind of man has almost suddenly become a mighty instrument for acquiring knowledge. Our much-libeled generation, which some myopic or fantastic writers represent as the ragged remains of a once fine race, shivering round the dying fires of civilization, has knowledge and power inconceivably greater than any generation ever had before. The past has bequeathed us only works of art, which we treasure, works of philosophy, which we admire at a distance, and works of theology, which we ignore.

It was inevitable that this new or real knowledge should begin with what is called material nature: stars, animals, plants, rocks, and so on. The eye, which (aided or unaided) is the chief implement of knowledge, looks outward, not inward. The mind had to gain practice and confidence in the easiest things first. It began with astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, botany, and zoology. This led people to say that science dealt with material things and left "spiritual things" to philosophy and religion. Today science is knowledge, and "spiritual things" are not embraced in a "science" only because no one can prove that they exist. Science is knowledge, and knowledge is power, and the salvation of the race from its remaining miseries and stupidities depends upon it. Science is the true Messiah, the only Redeemer, the Light and Hope of the World.

Hence the question of the relation of Christianity to the development of science is of an importance that cannot be exaggerated. The claim is still eloquently made in every pulpit, and is hastily admitted at times by people who ought to know better, that Chris-

tianity promoted civilization. If by Christianity we mean the supposed teaching of Christ, it has no good influence on civilization beyond urging men to be just and temperate and kindly—which every creed and moralist superfluously does, for life itself teaches the lesson every day—and it has, or would have if even Christians accepted it, a profoundly evil influence by its disdain of visible human things and the mirage of an eternal world which it puts in the heavens. If we mean the structure of doctrine weirdly built upon the words of Christ, it has no relation to civilization except to distract attention from the proper work of life and inspire fierce sectarian hatred. If we mean the Churches . . . Well, here we do and must mean the Churches, and, since the Protestant Church only begins at the very end of the Middle Ages, we mean mainly the Catholic Church; but Protestantism was at first equally guilty.

Let us sift the relevant from the irrelevant facts. The day has gone by in which it was possible to despise science. That pastime is now left to very imperfectly educated Fundamentalist preachers and politicians, addressing people who are, so to say, away from the irrigation channels of modern culture. Wherever there are good libraries, and people are free to consult them, the power and value of science are admitted. The apologist, who is the finest contortionist in the world, turned half about and claimed that the Church never had impeded the development of science. He has now turned full face and claims that the Church promoted science.

Catholic readers of writers like Father Zahm, etc., at least those Catholic readers who humbly bow to the Church's command that they must not read any criticism of its writers, really believe that these "professors" have proved that the Church promoted science. We shall examine these fraudulent works presently. Here I desire only to state principles.

What do we mean by the Church? The Popes? The whole hierarchy? Or the hierarchy and laity together? It will be found that these writers make great profit by juggling with these different conceptions. The Catholic Church in the third sense was practically the whole of Europe for a thousand years, and it has meant about one-half of the civilized world since then. Any person, therefore, who professes a naïve pride when he is told that lots of scientific men have been Catholics, is behaving foolishly. The serious questions are: whether the teaching of Christ and the official action of the Church are responsible, and to what extent, for the suspension of the development of science in the world for a thousand years; whether the revival of science in the thirteenth century (in Roger Bacon and his contemporaries) was not a pagan intrusion in Christendom, and was not stifled by the Church; whether it is true that the Church seriously hampered the two sciences, astronomy and medicine, which tried to advance in the later Middle Ages; and whether the beginning of the modern progress of

science got any help or hindrance from the Churches. Also, since there were bad Popes and good Popes, worldly priests and really religious priests, it is material to notice whether any Popes and priests who are favorably mentioned belonged to the first or second class. If they belonged to the first, the credit cannot be claimed for their religion, but must be accorded to their sinful humanity.

The outstanding and ghastly feature of that very long period is that there was not only not the least development of science, but what science had been previously acquired by the race was almost entirely lost to Christendom. The growth of science is necessarily very slow until it reaches a certain stage. It reached that stage, or was approaching it, amongst the ancient Greeks. Babylonia and Egypt had occupied what we might call the incubating period. Practical needs had driven them to make a beginning of science—in agriculture, irrigation, mechanics, decimal system, etc.—and speculative interest had been kindled in a fair study of astronomy and a lot of conjectures about the origin of things.

It was, however, rather a poor crop which the older civilizations handed on to the Greeks. The earliest Greeks to be civilized were those who crossed the sea from Greece to Asia Minor, where they met the Persians, and they at once began to cultivate a very real interest in science. The Greek mind was young and vigorous, and it mainly turned to speculations on the meaning of nature. Evolution at once occurred to it, and matter was declared to consist of atoms. The main thing was, however, that these Greeks insisted on the careful observation of nature itself; and they thus created the scientific spirit; or rather, enlarged it, for the Babylonian priests, studying the heavens unhampered by dogmas, were real scientists.

Greece might have inaugurated the kingdom of science on the earth but for the religion of the mass of the people and the "spirituality" of its philosophers. Scholars of the scientific type were driven from Athens by the mob. Philosophers like Socrates and Plato disdained and discouraged scientific investigation of nature. Religion always tends that way. The affairs of the "spirit" are so important.

Yet, as any modern manual of the history of science will tell you, the Greeks, nevertheless, made a famous beginning. Aristotle's "Physics" and other works contain a mass of information (amongst much nonsense) in astronomy, zoology, embryology, etc. The science of medicine was very greatly advanced by men like Galen and Hippocrates. The electric quality of amber *(electron)* and the magnetic quality of certain irons were perceived, and this might in time have led to a great development. The central position of the sun, and the approximate sizes and distances of sun and moon, were known. In Alexandria, where the last phase of Greek science, and the most industrious and promising of all, occurred,

mathematics and mechanics, the invaluable instruments of science, were wonderfully developed. All this was known to, but not further developed by, the Romans, whose empire-work and practical work for the improvement of civilization absorbed them.

Five hundred years after the Emperor Constantine made the fatal mistake of adopting Christianity, instead of Stoicism or Epicureanism (as Roman *gentlemen* did), nearly the whole of this knowledge had perished. Yes, I know, you have been reading the glowing words of some modern apologist about the marvelous works of Marticinus Capella, about Cassiodorus and the busy monks, about the encyclopedic lore of Isidore of Seville, and Rhabanus Maurus, and Vincent of Beauvais. It is a pity that some pious Catholic does not tranlate one of them. Selections from their pages would make excellent humorous readings. The most "scientific" and the latest of them, Vincent of Beauvais, justified the long ages ascribed to the patriarchs in the Old Testament on the ground that those ancient sages were familiar with "the philosopher's stone." In short, all the most puerile superstitions that were still current in rural districts a hundred years ago were the wisdom of these men. Not one in a thousand in Europe could read, and of the few who could read only a small minority cared about the weird mixture of adulterated Greek ideas and fantastic statements that were found in these works.

The reader who wishes to use me simply as a guide and to do the thinking for himself—and I hope that means the great majority of my readers who have access to a good library—will easily verify this first statement, that science perished in Europe from the fourth to the twelfth century (with an exception which we examine presently), by glancing at any modern history of science. It will have interesting and promising chapters on what the Greeks did, especially in medicine, astronomy, and mathematics; then a short paragraph on the scientific sterility and utter ignorance that followed the enforcement of Christianity; then a description of how the Mohammedans taught Christendom science, but the Church hampered its development.

For those who may not easily have access to a history of science I will briefly quote from a recent series in my library. Dr. Hillier in his "Medical and Surgical Science" speaks of the "somber picture" and "partial paralysis of intelligence" to the end of the fourteenth century; yet medicine was the least neglected of the sciences in that time. Professor Forbes, an orthodox Christian, finds in his "History of Astronomy" that from the time when the Christians put an end to the pagan schools of Alexandria "all interest in astronomy seemed to sink to a low ebb," and "the Arabs became the leaders of science and philosophy"; he can find no Christian to mention until the fifteenth century. Sir Edward Thorpe in his "History of Chemistry" has a complete blank

between the Greeks and the Arabs, and shows that the Christian beginning in the thirteenth century was due to the Arabs. Professor Woodward in his "History of Geology" leaves the Christian period a complete blank, except for the Arabs and Persians, down to the fifteenth century. Professor Miall in his "History of Biology" disdainfully says that there was "a temporary extinction of civilization," and the only natural history read (by the one in a thousand who could read) was in manuals which told "how the crocodile weeps when it has eaten a man," and so on—stories taken from the learned encyclopedias I have mentioned. Every history of every branch of science will tell you the same thing.

This temporary extinction of civilization we have already studied, and the discussion of the causes of it which I give in other chapters applies particularly to science. It is almost scandalous to find our historians shirking half, or more than half, the explanation, Christianity, and allowing the whole burden to fall upon "the barbarians." The barbarians did not burn the works of the pagans, as Christians did. The barbarians did not overrun Greek Christendom, yet not one single Greek Christian figures in the annals of science. The barbarians, as I have shown by several historical instances or parallels, could be civilized in a century by any real civilizing force.

Christian religion, precisely in its pure and strict form, was responsible. Christ and Paul had not the slenderest acquaintance with Greek culture, and were supremely indifferent to the issues it raised. The Fathers of the Church repeatedly expressed their indifference to those issues. The most learned and influential of them, Augustine, went out of his way to express his disdain of astronomical research. Gregory the Great sternly forbade all secular culture, and is said to have burned the libraries that still lingered in Rome. The advent of the barbarians alone would not mean more than a century or two of suspension of culture. It was the union of barbarism and the intense other-worldliness of the new religion that caused the suspension to last nearly a thousand years.

ROGER BACON AND HIS AGE

Apologists who fear that the modern reader is not quite so docile as his fathers were, who dread these damnable public libraries and low-priced books of our materialistic age, try to relieve this stark ignorance of the eight or nine centuries after the triumph of the cross. There was, says Father Zahm, an Egyptian monk of the sixth century, Cosmas Indicopleustes, who was a marvel of geographical knowledge. He was. If you want a good laugh at any time, read his description of the earth and its inhabitants. There were Bede and Isidore of Seville and other learned men; but I have already recommended these to any reader who likes a smile.

There was a Bishop Virgilius of Salzburg, in the eighth cen-

tury, who, contrary to general belief, held that there were people at the antipodes; and he remained a bishop and was much honored by the Popes. Yes—when he had recanted, as he was compelled to do. In any case, this was not science, not an ascertained fact. Virgilius contributed nothing to science.

Then there was actually a Pope, Gerbert, or Sylvester II, who is named in every manual of science as one of the great pioneers in physics. What do I mean by talking of a blank from the fourth to the thirteenth century when precisely the most learned physicist of the time was a Pope? It sounds very naughty or very ignorant, if all that you know about Gerbert has been learned from religious writers. He was, for his time, a remarkably good mathematician and physicist. But, pray read a little about his life. He was educated in Spain, and he knew Greek, if not Arabic; and, while the favor of worldly princes got promotion for him, the clergy gave him, even as Pope, such a time that he speedily sought relief in heaven. In plain English, poor Gerbert tried to get his fellow-Christians to adopt a little of the learning of the Mohammedans, and they hounded him off the planet, buried his learning with his bones, and purified Rome with holy water and curses when the "magician" had gone to hell.

Here, in fact, we insert at once one of those undisputed historical facts which apologists find it prudent to suppress. Recent students of Gerbert say that his works do not show traces of Arabic, but rather of Greek, borrowing. That matters little. The Saracens of southern Italy, who had the same Arabian scientific culture as the Moors of Spain, were translated into Greek. No one questions that Gerbert learned his mathematical and physical knowledge from the Mohammedans; and to the same source every single scholar now turns for the explanation of the scientific learning of Roger Bacon, Albert the Great, and every other early scholar or writer who shows some knowledge of science.

"Catholic Science and Catholic Scientists," by Father Zahm, professor of physics at the "University of Notre Dame," is, I understand, the gem of American apologetic work in this connection.

Zahm's work makes one wonder what standard (if any) of scholarship or sincerity is applied to professors at this doubtless distinguished University. Most of the book is argument, not fact, and one is not inclined to linger over it when one reads that there are three kinds of evolution—atheistic, agnostic, and theistic—and that the first class embraces only three men (who were *not* atheists but agnostics) and the third class includes Owen (who was Huxley's worst opponent) and Sir John Herschel. The American reader will be even more astonished to learn that eccentric old Orestes A. Brownson was "the first scholar of the age" and "one of the greatest philosophers that our age or any age had produced"

—poor Plato!—and that the French priest Moigno was "the Albertus Magnus of the nineteenth century."

Other pleasantries of the book are the statement that gunpowder was invented by a German monk, and the mariner's compass by another Christian; both inventions, of course, being due to the Arabs. We read of Galileo as the bosom friend and spoiled darling of the clergy of Rome, but not a word about his charming relations with the Inquisition. We are told that it is wrong to credit Harvey with the discovery of the circulation of the blood, and that "botany, zoology, geology, and mineralogy seem always to have exerted a peculiar fascination over the minds of the children of Holy Church"; in proof of which bewildering statement we are referred to St. Francis of Assisi, who probably could not have distinguished a cock from a hen. The first botanical garden is put at Pisa in 1543—several centuries after the Moors had had far finer botanical gardens; the first museums and libraries are put in Italy—whereas the Moors had had in the Dark Ages libraries ten times as large as the finest in Italy during the Renaissance; the science of arithmetic "owes its origin in Europe to the learned Gerbert," who merely borrowed it; and, with a sublime effrontery or incomprehensible ignorance, even chemistry and alchemy are ascribed to Christian originators.

Some may wonder why I should trouble to consider a book of this kind, and they will be astonished to learn that this work of Father Zahm is regarded by American Catholics as one of their finest apologies. You wish to know what the other side says, to know why millions of Catholics seem quite undisturbed by the terrible record of their Church? The answer is found in a number of trashy works of which this is held to be the "most learned."

The radical and gravest fault of the book is that it conceals from the reader entirely the brilliant science of the Moors and Saracens, and the fact that all Christian science in the early Middle Ages was borrowed from them. To talk of the science of Gerbert and Roger Bacon, Schwarz and Albert the Great, and say not a word about their Moorish teachers—to boast of all the science that there was in Christendom and give the reader the impression that it originated there, and that the Church actually encouraged science—is as gross a deception of one's readers as can be imagined. I do not say deliberate deception. A man may innocently deceive from ignorance, and, apparently, the standard of culture of professors in the "University of Notre Dame" is not exacting. But the Catholic reader ought to know what it is that is purveyed to him under shelter of the Church's stern prohibition to read critical books like this. Zahm either knew or did not know that all the science he finds in Christendom for a thousand years after Europe became Christian was Mohammedan science, confined to a very few men, and stifled by the Church.

I have described the brilliant civilization of the Moors and devoted a section to their revival and development of Greek science. Medicine, astronomy, chemistry, and mathematics were especially cultivated; optics (or physics generally) and botany received a good deal of attention; and some of the Khalifs and scholars were zealous for botany. Distinguished men of science were the most honored in the kingdom, a vast literature circulated, libraries ran up to collections of five hundred thousand books, and there was a zeal for learning in every class of society.

This Moorish civilization was only the western wing of a great Mohammedan, or Arab-Persian, civilization. A smaller, but hardly less brilliant, group of "Saracens" flourished in southern Italy. In the motherland (Arabia, Persia, and Egypt) there was just the same zeal for science as for letters, and most valuable discoveries were made. Within two centuries a splendid civilization had been evolved by the grafting of semi-barbaric tribes on an old and decaying culture—while you are asked to believe that "the great civilizing force" of Christianity could not do this in less than a thousand years in Europe—and its most splendid hour was just the darkest hour of Christendom, the ninth and tenth centuries. Mohammed came six hundred years after Christ, yet the Mohammedan world was, in every sense of the word (art, letters, science, philosophy, general education, humanity, philanthropy, prosperity, health, and efficiency), more highly civilized by the tenth century than Europe would be at the beginning of the nineteenth. I do not think that a single historian will question that comparison.

This culture of the Moors (or Arabs generally) was conveyed over Europe by Jewish merchants and scholars and by Christians who went to study in Spain. There was a corresponding stream of culture from the Saracen kingdom, as long as it lasted, in southern Italy. The only question about Gerbert's lore is whether he acquired more from his early years in Spain or his later years in Italy. Dante is much more interesting as a witness to a scholarly and skeptical group in Florence than to Christian faith. I have before me my well-fingered copy of Carlyle's "Dante," in English and Italian, and the notes show what the poet owes to pagan and Mohammedan sources. The Emperor Frederick II encouraged with all his power the importation of Saracen science into Italy.

The Jews were the chief intermediaries, and the earliest medical schools, which Zahm claims for Christianity, were due to them. But the tolerant Moors of Spain raised no barriers against Christian visitors, and these learned Arabic and translated hundreds of Moorish works into Latin.

This phase of the evolution of European culture has, fortunately, received the attention of an able American scholar in the last few years. In his "Studies in the History of Medieval Sci-

ence" (1924) Professor C. H. Haskins, of Harvard, has very thoroughly elaborated a theme on which I lectured at Columbia University ten years ago. With remarkable industry of research he has traced the movements and translations from the Arabic of a number of Christian scholars of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. He shows us how, whereas Europe had hitherto had only the wretched compilations of ancient lore and Christian fantasy to which I have already referred, large numbers of scientific and philosophical treatises were now introduced into it by these pupils of the Moors.

No one but a scholar knows these men today. Their names and labors are found in no encyclopedia. Hence writers of fragmentary knowledge like Zahm see only the figures of Roger Bacon and Albert the Great rising on the horizon of the thirteenth century and seem to be strangely ignorant of the meaning of their rise. They have never even heard of Adelard of Bath, or the early part of the thirteenth century, who absorbed and disseminated in England the whole scientific lore of the Arabs; was, in fact, a Roger Bacon just before Bacon. They have never heard of Robert of Chester, Roger of Hereford, Daniel of Morley, and other Englishmen who brought to England, France, Germany what the Catholic admires as a miracle in Roger Bacon and Albert the Great.

They ignore, or are ignorant of all these things, and they convey to their innocent readers impressive pictures of a monk in his pious monastery and a bishop in his episcopal mansion, both under the fostering care of Mother Church, suddenly, by Christian genius, developing a, for the time, surprising command of physical science; and they conveniently forget to tell the readers, or to stimulate them to inquire, why Bacon and Albert had *no successors,* and why their wonderful knowledge seemed to perish as miraculously as it had appeared.

But the historical facts are now so well known to properly informed people that the writer of the article on Roger Bacon in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" takes up a new attitude. "It would," he says, "be difficult to find any other scholar who shows such a profound knowledge of the Arabic philosophers as Bacon does." When you know that these "Arabic philosophers" were masters of precisely those branches of science on which Bacon writes—chemistry, optics, mechanics, and mathematics, as well as astronomy and medicine—the miracle disappears very abruptly. Bacon's chief aim, this writer says, was "to make Christian philosophers acquainted with the Arabic philosophers"; and the works, I may add, were already translated from the Arabic for him. You rub your eyes at this Catholic belittlement of the genius of Roger, until it dawns upon you that the writer is going to have to confess that the Church extinguished him and his science. Bacon was,

he says, "not always very correct in doctrine." What could you expect from a man who turned from the lore of the Christians to the lore of the Mohammedans? Well, the Church had to . . .

Even this writer does not truthfully tell the story of the extinction of Bacon, but let us first be quite clear about his position in the history of science.

The meaning of Bacon is now well known. He found Oxford already in possession of Moorish science, and he learned it. Being an exceptionally intelligent man, he saw at once that it was far superior to the verbiage of the Scholastic philosophers and theologians, and, being a blunt, outspoken man, he started a crusade against what was really Catholic learning, the teaching of the Schoolmen. He urged men to learn Arabic and Greek as well as Latin. The Franciscan school at Oxford was at the time under the influence of men like Grosseteste and Adam Marsh, who also were fond of the new learning; until Grosseteste was smothered with a bishop's mitre and Adam relegated to obscurity. For a time Bacon had considerable freedom, and he experimented, as the Moors did.

What exactly he personally achieved, and to what extent, if any, he surpassed his Moorish teachers, we cannot say. "Careful research," says the "English Dictionary of National Biography," the best authority, "has shown that very little can with accuracy be ascribed to him." He did not discover gunpowder, any more than Dr. Zahm's German monk Schwarz, for the Arabs had it long before. His best work on perspective is very plainly an echo of Alhazen. There is now no reason to suppose that he made a telescope. And so on.

Yet Roger was a man of great scientific capabilities, and, if the world had been free, he and Albert and a few others would certainly have inaugurated a scientific age. As to Thomas Aquinas, whom Catholic writers put amongst the "great scientists," the claim is simply ludicrous. Sir T. C. Allbutt, a great admirer of the Middle Ages, doubts whether Albert the Great was a genius, but he refuses to admit that Aquinas was "a man of the highest intellectual power and attainments." To mention him in connection with science is, in any case, like mentioning Francis of Assisi in connection with zoology.

Albert the Great (1193-1280) was a noble (Count of Bollstadt) who learned Arabian science in Italy and France, and somehow became a Dominican monk. He was so great an admirer of Aristotle (whom he knew through the Moors) that his critics called him "the ape of Aristotle"; and he knew so little about Greek thought generally that this "universal genius" of the age thought that Plato was a Stoic! He was certainly a man of very great ability and a master of most of the scientific lore of his time. But when you ask how Albert combined Catholic piety with this, you are warned even by so very pro-clerical a writer as the author

of the articles on Albert in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" that he was "prudent." I will translate a sentence of Albert's which this writer *prudently* leaves in the Latin: "I have set forth the sayings of the Peripatetics [Aristotelians] as well as I could; but no one can tell from my work what I myself think about natural philosophy." So the noble Albert was never persecuted by the Church. It chose, rather, the wiser alternative of taking him from the cloister where he studied Aristotle and Averroes and giving him episcopal work which kept him out of mischief. There had been ugly rumors of "sorcery." In short, Albert's knowledge of science consisted of the teaching of the Arabs and Moors, and the enthusiasm of Zahm and other writers like him, who seem to be totally ignorant of this, is very much misplaced.

Roger Bacon and Albert, therefore, are precisely the best evidence that the Church did not encourage, but did discourage, science. Albert was snuffed out under the golden extinguisher of ecclesiastical promotion. He left no successor to carry on the work, and monks were presently forbidden to dabble in science. But Bacon was *not* prudent. He scorned the futile verbiage which the academic clerics of the time called learning as much as he scorned the monastic and clerical corruption.

There is no serious dispute about what happened to Roger Bacon. Zahm simply omits the facts altogether, and the "Catholic Encyclopedia" omits the least pleasant of them. In 1257 Friar Roger, then thirty-three years old and of great repute at Oxford, was ordered by the higher authorities of his Franciscan Order (in Rome) to leave England (where he had freedom to cultivate science) and go to a monastery of his body in Paris. He remained there ten years in "close confinement," as the "Dictionary of National Biography" says. I am not particular whether you call this "prison" or not; when the "Catholic Encyclopedia" says that his superiors merely applied a general rule to him and "forbade him to publish any work out of the Order without special permission," it is untruthful. Roger was deprived of all books about science, all instruments, and pen and parchment. The "Encyclopedia" itself has to admit that a distinguished cardinal could not get into communication with him for years and that, when this cardinal became Pope and ordered Roger to write a book, the monk pleaded that he was not allowed writing material, even for a Pope.

The ten years of confinement and isolation, which kept one who may have been a scientific genius away from the laboratory, are uneasily evaded by the apologists who want us to see how the Church encouraged science. But the next step suits them. Guy de Foulques, Papal Legate and cardinal and in 1264 Pope Clement IV, clearly patronized science and urged Bacon to write. It was

for him, for the ruling Pope, that the friar wrote his "Opus Majus" and other works.

It sounds very well, like the "triumph of Christianity" and other matters, until you examine the details. Clement was no pietist of the type of Innocent III. We know little about him personally, but we do know that within thirty years of his death the Roman See was at the depth of one of its periodical degradations. Many a cardinal of that time was willing to learn something about the "magic" with which Bacon was credited. However, the Pope died before the books reached him, and it is a mere conjecture that it was he who got for the friar permission to return to England. Ten years of freedom and research followed, then the friar was again ordered to Paris and "imprisoned" (the "Catholic Encyclopedia" admits the word this time) for a further number of years which cannot accurately be determined. Most writers say fourteen.

Such was the Church's encouragement of science in the persons of its only great representatives in the glorious thirteenth century. Friar Bacon was harshly persecuted for about twenty years by the proper Church authorities over him, and Friar Albert the Prudent was side-tracked into a bishopric. The learning of both was Mohammedan in origin, and it exposed both of them to much obloquy and suspicion of heresy. And this undisputed account of the Church's patronage of science must be completed by a glance at the only two men who can be said to have followed in their footsteps in the attempt to popularize Arab science.

Albert died in 1280, Roger in 1294. By that time Cecco d'Ascoli, a professor at Bologna University, had taken up the mission, and was imploring men to turn from the sawdust of Scholasticism to the study of nature. On a faked charge he was handed over to the Inquisition and, in 1327, burned alive. Hardly less encyclopedic in his knowledge of and zeal for science was Peter of Abano, one of the most generous and most skillful physicians of the time. He was, just like Albert and Roger, a master of Arab science, and eager to see Christendom adopt and develop it. He also was, on a faked charge, denounced to the Inquisition and condemned; and, when the Inquisitors heard that he had meantime died and was buried, they ordered that his body should be dug up and burned. Nicholas of Cusa came a century and a half later, and will be considered presently.

Again there is no dispute about the fact; and I need not add that not a word is said about them by those Catholic writers who are informing America how the real history of medieval science has been rescued from naughty Rationalist libels. The truth about this first phase of European science will now be quite clear to the reader; and I repeat that there is no dispute about it. It is only by

omitting uncontroverted facts and by throwing together the names of men who lived centuries apart that a false idea is conveyed.

The science which appears in Grosseteste, Bacon and Albert in the thirteenth century is Arabian or Moorish science. The brilliant culture of the Moors had shamed Christendom at last, and a few men had the courage to learn the lesson. But the Church effectually stifled the movement, and men of the same type who appeared in the following century were handed over to the Inquisition.

COPERNICUS AND GALILEO

I am trying to let my readers know what these recent apologists offer us in opposition to the traditional Rationalist indictment. If it be true that the light which arose in the thirteenth century was merely, as Sir T. C. Allbutt says, "a phantom of a dawn," the world falling again rapidly in medieval darkness, and that the Church was responsible for its *failure,* and not in the least responsible for its *origin,* the sober case of humanity against the Church is more serious than ever.

Rationalist writers make mistakes in detail like all other writers. What I am showing is that disputes about small details do not matter. The broad historical truth is deadly. The science of the thirteenth century was Arab science. Every historian of science will tell you that. It was never encouraged by the Church, and after a short time it was extinguished by the Church. In the thirteenth century its chief representatives were imprisoned or diverted. In the fourteenth century they were, dead or alive, burned.

Apart from the development of medical and surgical science, the next branch of science that interests us from our present point of view is astronomy. Bear these three points in mind when you approach this question of astronomy and the Church: First, the Alexandrian Greeks, working upon the material bequeathed by the Chaldeans and using mathematics, had made a very fair beginning of the science. Secondly, it was a very innocent branch of science until modern times (when it certainly makes for atheism), because it dealt with material things. Thirdly, it was supposed in the Middle Ages to be quite a valuable science because it was the basis of astrology, and everybody who could afford it had his astrologer.

Yet there is no dispute about the fact that from the fourth to the thirteenth century Christendom had completely forgotten all that the race had already learned about the stars. Men gazed at the stars as sheep or cattle did. There was no curiosity. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the learning of the Moors, who were very keen astronomers, began to circulate. Abelard gave the name Astrolabe to his love-child by Heloise. The Church neither

encouraged nor discouraged, except in the very important sense that it decidedly taught men that its own kind of learning was infinitely superior. However, a man here and there got one of the beautifully made instruments of the Moors and poked them at the stars at night. Fat abbots and comfortable Popes and bishops, when they did not happen to want horoscopes, merely thought them fools, until at last the astronomers fell foul of the Bible.

It is strange how apologists talk so much about Copernicus, and so little about Nicholas of Cusa (1401-64). He was a greater scholar than Albert "the Great," and he realized the error of the Ptolemaic system long before Copernicus did. He was a thinker; and his thinking, as a priest, led him to see that the Papal power was based upon the atrocious fraud of the Forged Decretals, that General Councils were higher than Popes and must reform the Church, and that the Christian philosophy of God and the Universe was puerile. You never heard of this heretic? No, he swung around and became a most zealous champion of the Papacy, a Papal Legate and a cardinal. He no longer insisted on trifles like the position of the sun; he reckoned that, while it was true that reason taught him some very awkward things, "intuition" put a man right with the Church; and he left it to a more courageous man, Giordano Bruno, to go to the stake for his philosophy of God and the universe.

So we pass on to the other Nicholas, Koppernigk or Copernicus (1473-1543). You know his story, of course. This devout son of the Church made himself immortal in science by discovering the real nature of the solar system, yet remained an ecclesiastical dignitary and actually dedicated to the Pope the book in which he set forth his discovery. How dare any man say that the Church impeded the advance of science?

Well, let us go slowly—and we need not be long about this matter. I have mentioned a "History of Astronomy" by Professor Forbes, a Christian teacher who somehow got his book published by the Rationalist Press Association of England, and maintained in circulation after I had pointed out its anti-Rationalistic errors. I stress that the writer is an orthodox Christian, because the book makes a special study of Copernicus and purports to correct everybody else. In short, Forbes belittles Copernicus. His name, he says, ought not to be immortalized in the phrase "Copernican System." His book is a tissue of errors. In fact, according to Forbes, it is *Rationalists* who have manufactured the fame of Copernicus, "to put the Church in the wrong"! The paths which Copernicus gives to the planets and moons are hopelessly wrong.

I recommend that to the apologists and writers on "great Catholic scientists." Seriously, Copernicus discovered nothing. The revival of Greek astronomy by the Moors had recalled the fact that Pythagoras and others had, ages ago, held that the sun

was the center of the solar system. In Martianus Capella, Copernicus further read that the Egyptians had insisted that Venus and Mercury revolved around the sun. He opined, against the received opinion, that these ideas were correct, just as Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa had done a few decades earlier. Copernicus first announced his belief, but did not insist on it as a fact, in 1500, when he was teaching in Rome. As the ruling Pope Alexander VI, the Holy Father of six children, was then under the charm of the orbs of his pretty mistress, Giulia Farnese, and most of the cardinals were wrapped up in other ladies, the Church did not persecute Copernicus.

The historic controversy is about his book, "De Orbium Cœlestium Revolutionibus" ("On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Orbs"). Rather, there is no serious controversy about anything in connection with Copernicus, but apologists wriggle in order to show that the Church did not cramp, impede, or in any way injure science. Here are the undisputed facts:

Copernicus finished the writing of his book in 1530, and he kept it in manuscript for twelve years. I have not yet encountered the apologist who ventures to attribute this to modesty. Copernicus was afraid to publish the book. One of his pupils told Pope Clement VII about his system, and the Pope did not seem to be outraged. I can believe it. Clement VII was a noble of the Medici family, of liberal views about life. Still Copernicus dare not publish his book in Rome or anywhere else. Friends got the manuscript from him, and one of them at last hit upon the idea of saying in a preface that the author did not insist that this theory was *the truth*. He (Osiander) wrote this preface, to which Copernicus must have consented, and gave the manuscript to the press, in Nuremberg. Forbes is quite wrong in saying that Copernicus wrote the preface, and so Catholic apologists also are quite wrong in saying that he published his view "only as a hypothesis." These things were settled long ago. The book appeared, dedicated to Pope Paul III, in 1543, and a copy was put into the hands of Copernicus as he was dying. He died a few hours later.

It will at once be seen that the attempt to exonerate the Church is futile. Dread of the Church alone kept Copernicus for thirteen years from pressing the truth upon the world. The dedication to the Pope sounds quite nice and confiding until you look up (no one does) who the Pope was. That is why I urge the reader, when he hears a Pope or bishop praised in connection with science, to look up his record. Paul III had been flagrantly corrupt as a cardinal, and had attained that spiritual dignity only because his younger sister was in the arms of Pope Alexander VI. He had four children, and he was not in the least likely to lose a night's sleep over the question whether the sun did or did not stand still at the command of Joshua.

You do not read these little details in either academic or apologetic works on these subjects, but I hope you see how much they matter. When Copernicus' book reached the Vatican in 1543, Rome was still, and had been for half a century, semi-pagan: much more interested in Apollo and Aphrodite than in Moses and Joshua. The Popes had their own astrologers.

What, in any case, could the Church do? Copernicus was beyond the reach of the Inquisition, and his book was artfully protected by the preface in which Osiander said that it was merely a suggestion, not a statement of fact. It was left to that intrepid thinker, Giordano Bruno, to claim that the theory was a fact—and for this and other heresies Rome promptly butchered him (1600)—and to the man who has next to occupy us, Galileo Galilei. And remember that the ecclesiastical murder of Bruno was only a few years old when Galileo took up the theory.

There is no need here to go over the familiar ground. Galileo, a great physicist as well as astronomer, perfected the telescope, and soon found positive evidence that Copernicus was right. Philosophers hurled Aristotle at him, it is true, but the truth is only obscured by dragging in the prejudices of these gentlemen. The question of the statements in the Old Testament which decidedly make the sun go around the earth, was raised, and Galileo still maintained his position and said that the texts could be explained. The "hounds of the Lord," the Dominican friars, the most despicable religious body in Europe, denounced him to the Roman Inquisition. The Archbishop of Pisa was secretly instructed to get hold of certain private letters of Galileo, which were said to compromise him. Galileo, confident of his case, went voluntarily to Rome—it is a mistake to say that he was summoned by the Inquisition to Rome in 1615—and seemed to be getting the better of his bitter monkish and clerical enemies, when a grim summons from the Inquisition reached him.

So far there is no controversy; and there is a dispute only about one point in what follows. Fortunately, the main point for us is clear. It is not whether the polite Inquisitors supplied the aged Galileo with Oxo and pneumatic cushions, or something of that sort, at his second trial, or whether Galileo was dogmatic or conceited or anything else. It is whether the Inquisition condemned the belief that the earth revolves around the sun as "heresy." That is the sole point. If they did, it is ludicrous to say that they did not interfere with science; for "heresy" was a sure pass to their dungeons and torture-chambers.

There is, again, no dispute whatever about the fact that they did. Two propositions of Galileo's were submitted to the experts:

1. The sun is the center of the world, therefore, immovable from its place.
2. The earth is not the center of the world, and is not immovable, but it moves, and with a diurnal motion.

The documents containing the verdict have been reproduced in the original, and I have read the Latin text. White is quite correct in his "Warfare" when he says that (quite apart from philosophical censures) the first proposition was declared *"formally heretical,* inasmuch as it expressly contradicts the doctrine of Holy Scripture in many passages," and the second proposition was declared *"at least erroneous in faith."*

Writers like Zahm neatly surmount the difficulty created by this branding of a great astronomical truth as "formal heresy" by omitting the words altogether! Others humorously point out that it was not the Pope, or the Church, but merely the Roman Inquisition, which condemned science. That is the thinnest of all subterfuges. The members of the tribunal of the Inquisition at Rome acted solely on the authority of the Popes, and they represented the Church in the most official sense. At the second condemnation of Galileo the Pope followed and directed every step with great zeal, if not vindictiveness.

The only serious dispute is whether in 1615 Galileo was ordered under all conditions to refrain from teaching his heresy, and promised. He was summoned before Cardinal Bellarmine who, in the name of the Inquisition, laid some such command upon him and dismissed him. But the report of the actual words of Bellarmine was, with suspicious convenience, only found at the time of Galileo's second trial in 1633, and weighty authorities regard it as falsified. The best, indeed the only sober and substantial life of Galileo at present available to American readers, is J. J. Fahie's excellent "Galileo: His Life and Work" (1903). A pretentious little book (a few reprinted articles from the "Scientific American") by Dr. C. S. Holden ("Galileo," 1905) shows a complete lack of sense of proportion; and many of its points were undone when, two years later, the famous expert on Galileo, Antonio Favaro, published for the first time the full documents about the trial of 1633 ("Galileo e l' Inquisizione"). Forbes' "History of Astronomy" has merely one ridiculous and totally inaccurate paragraph on Galileo. He puts the murder of Bruno after the condemnation of Galileo!

It must remain an open question whether Galileo was absolutely and under all conditions forbidden to discuss the theory further. All Copernican books were, at the direction of the Pope, put on the Index, on the ground that the main idea was "entirely contrary to Holy Scripture." It confirms what I said about the Church and Copernicus that the work of Copernicus himself was merely put on the black list "until it is corrected"; and a few immaterial alterations enabled it to pass the censor. The Church could not condemn Copernicus, because the preface which was written in his name declared that he did not hold the Pythagorean idea to be

true; so it is futile to boast about the Church's liberality in regard to Copernicus.

If it were of vital importance to know whether Galileo broke faith with the Church, we should have to settle the difficult question about the actual terms of the order given him by Cardinal Bellarmine. Holden and others obscure the issue by talking a great deal about Galileo's breach of faith, obstinacy, etc. But the really vital issue is plain. It is: Did the Church condemn as heresy the statement that the earth revolves around the sun? There is no dispute about that. It did.

The controversy, of course, continued. The orthodox were perfectly free to gird at Galileo, and in time—I do not care a cent whether or not this was a violation of his promise, and I rather hope that it was—Galileo hit back. And he hit hard. In his "Dialogues" (1632) he made these people who denied the existence of sun-spots, and refused to look at them through the telescope, squirm. "Now," said a liberal prelate at Rome, sadly, "the Jesuits will get him." The Lord had new hounds, black instead of white, the dark-loving sons of St. Ignatius instead of the bloody-robed sons of St. Dominic.

But let not the apologist escape by pleading that even Jesuits and Inquisition together do not represent the Church. The documents reproduced in Fahie and every other fully informed writer show that the new Pope, Urban VIII, truculently egged on the Inquisitors and is as responsible as any of them. Galileo was, beyond question, very ill, but the Inquisition harshly replied that his subterfuge would not be tolerated. Writers who talk about the "consideration" with which Galileo was treated ought to read the letters sent him from Rome (in Favaro's work). In the harshest possible language he is told that a commissary is to be sent to see if he is not lying about his health, and, if he is found fit to travel, he is to be sent "in custody, bound, and in irons," to Rome. All the "consideration" the Pope—who was in the lead—showed was that, when the seventy-year-old scientist was found to be really very ill, he was graciously permitted to travel in comfort. But heaven and earth could not restrain the Pope's vindictiveness. Men said that Galileo had caricatured him in the "Dialogues."

Galileo set out for Rome in January, 1633. He was kept in suspense and anxiety for several months. Reasonable prelates strained every nerve to restrain the Pope from punishing (and probably killing) the most learned man in Europe, and from condemning what was now a palpable scientific truth. Kepler had long before this formulated the laws of the solar system. But Jesuits and Dominicans and Pope were determined to avenge their wounded vanity—or to vindicate the faith—and in the early summer Galileo had to move to the palace of the Inquisition.

What follows is airily waved aside by the apologists with

an assurance that these wicked Rationalists of long ago have been proven to be quite wrong about "dungeons" and "tortures," and that we now know that Galileo was "treated with every consideration," and the Pope himself directed that he be lodged in the most comfortable rooms available.

Yes—Urban VIII directed every step. It is true that Galileo was at first housed in comfortable rooms; a wonderful concession to a man of seventy, in very bad health, and faced with the most appalling of trials. But let us be just to the Rationalists as well as to Jesuits. As Fahie shows, and any man may verify in the documents, *we do not know where Galileo was from June 21st to June 24th.* The evidence is consistent with the view that he was put in the dungeons.

As to torture, the phrase used in the documents is ambiguous, and might mean torture or the threat of torture; but it certainly meant at least the latter. Galileo was, in the usual way, threatened with torture, but his willingness to recant most probably—I should say certainly—saved him from it. The aged scientist was compelled to go on his knees and swear that he did not believe that the earth moved around the sun. The formula given by White in his "Warfare" (which is quite accurate about Galileo) is a fair abridgment of the long confession dictated to Galileo:

> I, Galilei, being in my seventieth year, being a prisoner on my knees and before you Eminences, having before my eyes the Holy Gospels, which I touch with my hands. . . . I abjure, curse and detest the said errors and heresies of the movement of the earth and the stationary sun, etc.

I have compared this with the original and find that each of these phrases is in it.

The story that Galileo—his surname is Galilei, but even the Italian Galileists call him Galileo—rose from his knees muttering, "It moves for all that," has no authority and is improbable in the last degree. But he knew that it moved, and there is something nauseous in the way in which the priests now try to clear the Church by calling attention to the "cowardice" of Galileo. As it was, although he recanted, he was condemned to confinement for life, at first in a strange house and place. And these things are sneered at by men who, for a comfortable living, keep the truth in their hearts and lies on their lips.

The "Catholic Encyclopedia" article is a summary of all the glib sophistry ever written from the Catholic side. Galileo did not prove his case, and Galileo was irritating, and Galileo did not appreciate Kepler, and Galileo meddled with theology, and—in short, a group of theologians (not the Church, of course) committed the error of condemning him personally (not his idea, of course) as "vehemently suspected of heresy."

I need answer only on two points. First, it is absolutely notori-

ous in the history of the case that the Pope directed every step at the second trial. Napoleon's troops, luckily, stole the Galileo documents from the Vatican Archives, and France restored them only on condition that they be published; and, although Rome at first published a fraudulent version of them, all have now seen the light. That Pope Urban does not put his name to the decree of the Inquisition is, from the Catholic or any other point of view, either quite irrelevant, since he directed the whole proceedings and the tribunal acted entirely in his name, or it is worse. The Church condemned Galileo and the Copernican theory with the utmost official solemnity, through the proper and authoritative organ for that purpose, the Holy Office.

And, secondly, the Church condemned, not merely the person of Galileo, as these writers mendaciously say, but the truth that the earth moves around the sun. The decree of the Inquisition repeats and embodies the earlier condemnation of this truth as "formally heretical" because it contradicts the Bible. It goes on to say that Galileo is "vehemently suspected by this Holy Office of heresy, that is, of having believed and held the doctrine (which is false and contrary to the Holy and Divine Scriptures) that the sun is the center of the world." This means, not that the Inquisitors suspect astronomical doctrine of heresy, but that they suspect Galileo of holding, or having held, what they categorically call a "heresy." The formal declaration is that it is "heresy" to hold that the earth moves around the sun. The words " 'seems' to be contrary to Scripture," which are inserted by the writer in the "Catholic Encyclopedia," are an invention of his own. The Inquisition was categorical.

And any Catholic who suggests that the Pope, who directed every step, has no responsibility for that decree, has his tongue in his cheek. Pope Urban was appealed to all his life against that decree. Subsequent Popes were appealed to repeatedly to clear the Church of its disgrace. But they maintained the condemnation of Copernican works on the Index—Pope Alexander VII formally lent his name to it in 1664—until the whole civilized world laughed at their stupidity and the days of Voltaire arrived. And long after even that time Catholic universities in really Catholic lands (Spain) were still teaching that, as Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, Copernicus was wrong.

Well, what do *you* think? Don't talk about the infallibility of the Pope. That doctrine is not involved. Its formula was drawn up with an eye on the case of Galileo. But did the Church promote science? Or did the Church grievously hamper science? In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it extinguished Bacon and Albert, and murdered Cecco d'Ascoli and Peter of Abano. In the seventeenth century, even after the Renaissance, it murdered Giordano Bruno, and it let the scientific world know, in the person of Gali-

leo, that any man of science who said, and persisted in saying, that the earth moved round the sun, would be burned at the stake. It was "heresy." Probably you itch . . . But if you are a Protestant, my good reader, wait until you hear what the Reformers did.

THE REFORMATION AND SCIENCE

The Protestant era coincides with the early scientific era. It most decidedly did not inspire science, but, after its first few years of fanaticism, and apart from certain localities (Puritan New England or Scotland), the fact that it had removed the tyranny of the Popes and the Inquisition greatly facilitated the progress of science. We may not like to see so much blame put on the Catholic Church and so little on the Protestant, but we must keep some sense of history. Protestantism comes *after* the Renaissance; Catholicism before it.

The development of science from that time onward illustrates this. England, for instance, has, for so small a country, a remarkably high record in the development of science. Francis Bacon, writing in the last years of the sixteenth and early years of the seventeenth century, did splendid service in urging the direct study of nature. It does not matter two pins that he opposed Copernicus (whose general system is absurd and far removed from true science), made no discoveries, and did not at once strike the correct methods of research. The modern attempt of a few to belittle him in comparison with Roger Bacon is silly. Patient research has shown that we cannot be sure that Roger Bacon went beyond what he found in the Arab works already translated for him. But Lord Bacon gave a splendid call to scientific research, and from his time onward England contributed mightily to the progress.

With one exception, and it is important in connection with our present subject, there was certainly no encouragement of science during the Puritan reaction. No man can get away from the fact that it was in the semi-pagan, semi-skeptical, loose-living—in a word, very far from Christian—days of Elizabeth, and the Stuarts, and Queen Anne, and the Georges that science made progress: just as it did in Italy whenever the joyous pagan note returned, as it did in France under the immoral Louises and the Revolution, and so on. Genuine deep-felt religion has always acted like a blight on it.

Protestantism, in other words, insofar as it was a sincere religious movement, dissociated from political or other secular considerations, something more than a protest against Papal usurpation and exploitation, means a return to primitive Christianity; and this means a blight on art and science and everything merely human. It always did. You may talk sentimental rhetoric about the Christian legend and the hope of heaven lifting up the hearts of the poor, and so on. You may say—though it is ridiculously

false—that I have no sentiment. But the plain common-sense view is that unless the Christian promise is *true*, it is a blight. Precisely insofar as it was sincerely believed, it has suspended the development of civilization. It was not "bad Popes" who did this, but good Popes.

The Reformers notoriously scorned and hampered science. The great scientific issue in their day was Copernicanism, and they were as mischievous as the Inquisition. Luther and Melanchthon were as fierce against Copernicus as Pope Urban VII was against Galileo. The Copernican view was opposed to the Bible . The sun was *not* the center of the system, so it was ridiculous to talk about astronomical proof. The same attitude is so clearly reproduced in the American Fundamentalists today, in regard to so solid a scientific fact as evolution, that we need not linger over it. Calvin was worse than Luther, as he was less sensual and nearer to the asceticism of Christ. His ghastly crime in murdering Servetus—he did that as truly as a man who hires a gunman—was inspired very largely by the consciousness that the science of Servetus was a deadly foe of his theology.

No, Protestantism pure and sincere is a blight on science. But the world was awakening when Protestantism appeared, and the narrow fanaticism of the Reformers could not be sustained. Errors for which men had fought truculently in the name of religion were now proved beyond cavil to be errors. Races were actually found living at the antipodes. Navigators sailed round the world, so it was not flat. The advance of astronomy proved beyond question that the earth revolved round the sun, and the universe was a vast affair. Then science began to show its fruits, and, just as Popes had encouraged anatomy when they realized that it enabled their physicians to deal better with their gout or syphilis, so the whole race now insisted on freedom to develop science.

CHAPTER XXIX

The Jesuits: Religious Rogues

The Sainted Ignatius—The Men of Jesus as Men of Blood—
The End and the Means—Two Centuries of Jesuitry

The Sainted Ignatius

IN the year 1521, when Martin Luther was waiting nervously in Wittenberg to hear Rome's reply to his burning of the Pope's Bull; when Canon Nicholas Copernicus was, a few hundred miles further north, brooding over the terrible truth that the earth turns round the sun; when Magellan made the mightiest voyage yet known in history—a Spanish officer named Iñigo de Loyola passed through a religious crisis in his father's castle at the foot of the Pyrenees. He had been shot in the French war, and he learned that he was lame for life. On what could his fierce energy and ambition now expend themselves? Iñigo was a northern Spaniard, a Basque, a veritable Quixote in knightly ambition, and only about thirty years old. A lame leg . . . . His career as a soldier was closed.

Such little details have more than once helped to shift the course of history. As the fiery little man with the dark blazing eyes lay cursing on his bed, a pious sister put the "Lives of the Saints" near him. *Caramba de caramba,* here was a new kind of fighting—against devils—in which lame legs did not matter! Hitherto Iñigo, or Ignatius, as he re-christened himself, had tempered the chaste austerity of his love of God with the love of maids; though he had been, for a Christian soldier, rather sober. He had been, one who knew him says, "prone to quarrels and amatory folly." But lame men do not wisely pick quarrels; and maids do not offer smiles to lame men. So Ignatius was converted.

It was a long business. Whenever you read about Ignatius and the Jesuits, you read about "the great authority on the subject," M. Crétineau-Joly. Understand at once that this man's history of the Jesuits, which even neutral historians sometimes follow, is just as reliable as a Christian Science account of the history of Mrs. Eddy. It was written in collusion with the Jesuits. It is a Jesuit tract. I can show you the value of it at once. Crétineau-Joly speaks of Iñigo's change of plan as a "sudden revolution": the grace of God, of course, and all that bunk. Well, the process lasted nine months, as is well known. But a lame leg thrown into the scale of

Jesus and Mary, as against Mars and Aphrodite, turned the balance.

Certainly Iñigo—or let us now call him Ignatius—was converted and became a deeply religious man. The best proof is that he momentarily lost what reason he had. He decided, after a pilgrimage to Montserrat and a visit to Rome, to cross the sea and convert the Turks to Christianity. Somehow, it took him a year to get out of Spain, and the flimsy excuses of his biographers are silly.

In Montserrat, a famous shrine of the Virgin, he was housed in a Benedictine monastery, and he quite clearly got here the idea of founding a new monastic body, a fighting army of his own. His temporary insanity continued in proof of the depth and sincerity of his conversion. He gave his rich clothes to a beggar, and donned the beggar's rags; and children laughed and pointed the finger at "Father Sackcloth," with long dirty nails and unkempt hair, as he walked the streets. Which, in a Spanish grandee, is a sure proof of piety to the verge of insanity. After a time he lodged in a solitary cavern at the foot of the hills and practiced great austerities. Here he wrote the famous "Spiritual Exercises" of the Jesuit Society.

In other words, Ignatius of Loyola most decidedly became profoundly religious. We may set aside melodramatic theories that he just exchanged a secular for a clerical ambition as firmly as we set aside the "sudden revolution" theory. But the Jesuit story, based upon his own assurances, that he worked out at this time, in the Manresa cavern, the plan of his famous regiment for fighting Protestantism, is moonshine. For one thing, Ignatius kept on saying for a further five years that his business was to convert the Turks. As a fact, he went to Syria, and the monks at Jerusalem promptly shipped him back to Venice as an undesirable. He did not, in any case, know a word of any language except Basque and Spanish.

He went back to Spain, and he had sense enough to see that his dense and unlimited ignorance was not a good qualification for the new kind of fighting. He laboriously acquired some education and gathered disciples about him. The young men of Barcelona nearly beat him to death for persuading the nuns to abandon their amours; the Inquisition at Alcala threatened him; the Rector of Paris University—he traveled everywhere, even to London—ordered him to be publicly flogged. He was regarded everywhere as an ignorant and obnoxious fanatic, the butt of the street-boys and the bane of respectably immoral clerics. The fellow was trying to imitate Christ.

In short, Ignatius of Loyola was no schemer at first. But he slowly acquired an education and a half dozen close followers in the course of ten years. They formed a secret society for promoting the glory of God. They vowed now either to go and convert the Turks or to do whatever the Pope ordered. The only Jesuitical

feature as yet was the melodramatic secrecy that Ignatius imposed. But he also imposed—this is the exact opposite of Jesuitry—the most sternly ascetic practices and admitted only youths of real piety and ability. The result was that he got only six men in his secret society in fifteen years, out of three Christian countries, and in 1537 the seven of them, in apostolic rags, walked from Paris to Rome and asked the Pope's blessing on their mission to the Turks. "If you get there," said the Pope, smiling.

Here the story of Ignatius begins to lose its holy simplicity. These pupils or disciples of his were clever students, some of them brilliant, but neither he nor they learned a word of Turkish or Arabic or anything about Mohammedanism. Moreover, they had, after years of delay, started for the east just after the east was hopelessly closed against them by a new war. They were all monks in life (except that they were strictly chaste), but they refused to join any existing order. They met always in secret, and kept their plans secret. They tended the sick and taught in various Italian towns, but above all they fished for new recruits for the unauthorized "Company of Jesus," as Ignatius called his little group. Ignatius himself remained in Rome, and in his angling for the authorization of his body, he founded the diplomatic tradition of his society. "Let us," he said piously to his pupils, "avoid all relations with women—except those of the highest rank." Not because the latter are less inflammatory.

They all gathered in Rome in 1538: eleven in number after sixteen years, and hated by half the world for their secretive and eccentric ways. Ignatius applied for authorization. One of the three cardinals appointed to consider the matter was so sore about the monks—had not the corrupt rascals brought this new German pest upon the Church?—that he blocked the way. But Ignatius secured a shower of "unsolicited testimonials," and in 1540 the Society of Jesus was authorized. It was founded by diplomacy, for no one wanted it. It won its authorization by cultivating the rich and powerful, at the direct command of Ignatius. It brought itself into close relationship with the Papacy by professing itself a special regiment under the direct orders of the Pope. It took up, especially, the work of education—its early care of the sick, by which it won its way, was soon abandoned—and it made blind obedience to superiors its specialty. Its own historians speak of the "holy wiles" of its founder during those years. In plainer English, the end justified the means, from the start.

The Society of Jesus is not a monastic body. Rome knows, though American Catholics do not seem to know, that no monastic body ever remained uncorrupted for fifty years. The Vatican wanted no more of them. And, although the rules of the Society are really monastic, there was from the first one peculiar distinction from all the monastic bodies in the world. Instructions were given

that rich and noble, not poor, youths were to be sought to fill the ranks.

In other words, by a singular development the stupid-looking and entirely unworldly fanatic of 1522, "Father Sackcloth," had become a real Jesuit by 1540. Intrigue became a passion with him. Power, to do good, of course—was what he sought incessantly.

I need say nothing further about Ignatius himself than that he ruled the Society until he died, in 1556, entirely in that spirit. In Italy and Spain he wanted the Pope and Inquisition to stifle in blood any dissent from the creed. In the new Protestant lands his men were to be white-fleeced lambs bleating about the sacred principle of liberty of conscience. Everywhere they had above all to accommodate themselves to the circumstances. Their vow of poverty was to be no ban against their living in a rich man's house; but, when the man died, his house and wealth must be secured for the Jesuits. Generally they were in a new place to beg their bread and tend the sick. Once this had attracted wealthy patrons, they abandoned the sick, built colleges, and selected the boys of noble and wealthy families among their pupils for persuasion to become Jesuits. They were fiercely attacked in most countries; and one by one their critics, even bishops and archbishops, were silenced by messages from the Pope. The "black Pope" was already installed at the Vatican.

This diplomacy and a certain appeal to the melodramatic and picturesque and military elements in human nature enabled the Society to count its thousand members before Ignatius died. Already, in 1556, there were Jesuits in Abyssinia, the Congo, India, Japan, and Brazil; and they had penetrated Protestant England and Germany. It must not, however, be imagined that the thousand soldiers of Jesus in 1556 were like the heroic six who had walked afoot from Paris to Rome in 1537. The great college at Coimbra, in Portugal, was corrupt as early as 1546, and the Jesuit in charge fought for his post against reformers. But Ignatius won, as he always did. He left, on the whole, a fine battalion, of equal astuteness and fighting spirit, at the disposal of the Pope for the struggle against Protestantism. That had become the great aim, and I suspect that Ignatius had foreseen it twenty years earlier.

For the strange chapters which follow I do not intend to refer the reader to other writers, and I recommend no books here. The literature about the Jesuits is as melodramatic as the Jesuits themselves: in one half the books the Jesuits are devils, in the other half angels. They were men, acting in peculiar conditions, under a peculiar set of rules and maxims. I have written a large "Candid History of the Jesuits" (1913), based upon the original documents and the best authorities, and I need not repeat the references here where I differ from the naïve Catholic story of the Jesuits. Few people, in any case, look up references. Footnotes in historical

works are largely testimonials to the erudition of the writer. But I have minutely studied the story of Iñigo de Loyola and his followers from the year 1521 to the year 1910, and every statement I make here is substantiated in my larger history.

THE MEN OF JESUS AS MEN OF BLOOD

Long before he died Ignatius, as I said, concluded that the proper work of his Society was the restoration of the faith in Protestant lands by means of intrigue. The end was obviously the greatest service a man could then render to religion; the means he chose suited his temperament and the peculiar vanity which every reformer blends with his idealism; the work enabled him to live the life of a saint, a soldier, and a statesman.

Rome had never seen such a figure as that of the first General of the Society of Jesus. He was a saint: yet half the priests in the city hated him. Whenever the Jesuits in modern times are attacked, one of them mounts the pulpit and modestly reads out the "Spiritual Exercises": the manual of prayer, meditation, and asceticism which Ignatius composed for them. "There we are," the Jesuit implies, "in real truth. Do you think that we who are nurtured spiritually on such diet as this are likely to be guilty?" Then the preacher descends to join his colleagues merrily over a bottle of the best that the country affords and draw up a list of the pleasant ladies (not their charwomen) whom he will visit on the morrow. I have shared the bottle, and I know.

For Ignatius and his early followers those "Spiritual Exercises" were very real. He slept only four hours a night. In the morning he spent four hours in prayer. He had only three books in his room, the Bible, the Breviary (the priest's prayer-book), and an "Imitation of Christ"; and he was excused by the Pope from reading the Breviary because he wept so much over the lives of the saints in it that his sight was threatened. He was not out to fight heresy with books. He worked at his desk until noon, when, in strict silence, he and the others dined. Then he spent several hours visiting hospitals, visiting cardinals and nobles—visiting anybody whom it was useful to visit. Then a common evening meal in silence, a secret report to him on the conduct during the day of every inmate of the establishment, and finally the prolonged meditation by the light of the midnight lamp. The last is the part I understand best, for it is my custom; though, while the inspiration of Ignatius was a crucifix, mine comes from a pipe and a bottle of beer or port. It makes no difference.

It was a strange new Europe over which the apostles of the new type were sent, nightly surveyed by the arch-diplomatist of religion. Nearly half of Christendom was lost to the Papacy, and other countries were being rapidly contaminated.

Protestantism was making serious progress in France. Catholics

have an absurd idea that the French were always the most devoted children of the Pope, whereas there had been almost more heresy in France than anywhere else before the Reformation; after that date until the nineteenth century the French clergy gave Rome more trouble than any in the world; and today France is the least religious civilization on the earth. A French historian of distinction has recently said that in point of fact his country never seriously adopted Christianity.

France at once opposed the Jesuits, and Ignatius saw all his plans foiled. He won a French cardinal, who won the king for him, but it was no use. When the king authorized the good Jesuits to settle in France, the Parlement refused to register his letter of authorization, the University (the very cradle of the Society) scorned the new semi-monks and their privileges, and the Archbishop turned them out of Paris. A very strange lot these new apostles are, the French said. How humbly they walk, and how meekly (at first) they wash the sores of the sick; and how, the moment you cross them, they produce Papal privileges from their grips which none had ever enjoyed before, and all sorts of counts and cardinals (or countesses and cardinals' mistresses) get busy behind the scenes! Even when they won the queen, even when they were instructed to drop their name and all their rights and their privileges, the lawyers, clergy, and people bitterly opposed their entrance into Paris. Ignatius' successor had to go in person to France and spend months there; and he so bullied and terrorized the superstitious Italian queen, Catherine de Medici, who virtually ruled after her husband's death, that at last the Jesuits got in—and the Protestants got out, murdered.

The Jesuits had got in by the influence of the queen and her young son, but they were hated. Then they had a stroke of "luck." In 1567 Father Oliver Manares, the head of the Jesuits in Paris, "discovered" a great plot of the Huguenots (Protestants) in that city. This put up the prestige of the Jesuits so high, and turned the scale against the Protestants so heavily, that the chief Jesuit at Lyons, Father Auger, "discovered" a plot in that city also. There is some evidence of plotting at Lyons, but the Paris business was sheer Jesuitry. The fabricator of the plot, Manares, was afterward found by the Jesuits themselves to be a corrupt and ambitious man. In 1581 they had to appoint a commission to consider his personal conduct, and it condemned him. He was one of the most eminent of the early Jesuits.

And there is very good reason to believe that this brilliant idea of the Jesuit, that the Huguenots were plotting a great massacre of Catholics, actually inspired the St. Bartholomew Massacre of the Protestants themselves. The historian who in considering crimes of the Jesuits demands positive evidence is an ass. Secrecy and the obliteration of evidence were from the start a vital part of their policy.

We need to take a reasonable view of the probabilities, and not go beyond the probabilities. The new practice of listening to the Jesuits themselves lands our historians in all sorts of contradictions. In what ought to be the weightiest modern work on the St. Bartholomew Massacre, the "Cambridge Modern History," we are told on one page (twenty) that the Pope "is said to have expressed dismay"—which is a grossly misleading concession to a late perversion of well known facts—and on another page (two hundred and eighty-five) that the Pope heard the news of the vile carnage with "triumphant acclamation."

In another hundred years, if there are any Catholic apologists left, they will be proving that the St. Bartholomew Massacre was a myth. It was a cowardly, brutal, almost unprecedented orgy of blood (August 24-25, 1572). The Protestants of France had become strong enough to sustain a civil war for eight years, and the ablest of the French Jesuits, Auger and Possevin, accompanied and egged on the troops on the field of battle. This "war of religion" disgraced even the later Middle Ages by the barbarity of the combatants. A peace had to be arranged, and the queen then lured all the leading Huguenots to settle in Paris by a hypocritical show of favor and by marrying her daughter to the Protestant prince Henry. Then she presided over the cold and deliberate plot of massacring them all while they slept in their beds, and orders were sent over France to imitate the glorious heroism of the capital. Something like fifty thousand Protestants—estimates run from thirty thousand (as counted by the butchers) to seventy thousand (as counted by the butchered)—were slain in this revolting service to God and the Pope.

Of course you will find no proof that Jesuits were in the plot. I do not even suggest that any of them had been told in advance of the actual conspiracy. That will never be known, and I am not prepared to say that it is probable that they were so informed. The General of the Jesuits had seen Catherine de Medici a few months earlier, and critics suggest that he, vaguely at least, inspired the plot. That is not in keeping with his personal character. But three things are certain and instructive. First, the Jesuits were ridiculously unsuccessful in intellectual controversy with the Protestants. Secondly, the Jesuits all over Europe advocated the extinction of heresy by the blood of the heretics. Thirdly, the leading French Jesuits were particularly aggressive, and they had a very great influence on the queen. For years they had lashed her against the Huguenots and supported the war. They acquiesced in her hypocritical disarming of the Protestants as well as the massacre. They created her state of mind and applauded the result.

Auger, the chief Jesuit, was the father-confessor of the king; and he was as ready to overlook the constant debauches of that degenerate son of the miserable Italian queen as to approve his neu-

rotic bloodthirstiness. And, when this poor caricature of a king proved not Catholic enough and was murdered, in 1588, Jesuits hailed the murder openly as "the eternal glory of France." Nearly every distinguished Jesuit of the time held that it was lawful to murder a king in the interest of religion. Crétineau-Joly himself quotes fourteen of them. Father Mariana (1599) wrote a special book ("On the King and the Institution of the King") to prove it. And in 1595, only about twenty years after St. Bartholomew, the Jesuits were ignominiously thrown out of France, and their leader executed, for plotting to murder the new king.

There is little of interest to say of the Jesuits in England in those early days, except that here they began their theatrical practice of wearing disguises. The number of Jesuit martyrs in the glorious campaign against the English heretics is small. They very sensibly proceeded on the maxim that a living Jesuit provides more seed of Christians than a dead martyr. Two of them went to Ireland— a rather silly business as they spoke no Irish and little English—and to Scotland, where they stiffened the king against the Reformation. The modern Irish Catholic will learn with surprise that these early Jesuits of the sixteenth century reported that almost all the leading men in Ireland were in sympathy with Protestantism! They seem to have been practically driven out of the country.

They avoided England, and Jesuit writers are not very clear when they have to explain how it was that Jesuits were not even permitted to enter the country under the Catholic "Bloody Mary." There is no reason to doubt the explanation given in Burnet's "History of the Reformation" (ii, 526). Ignatius had laid down the condition that the rich monastic property confiscated by Henry VIII should be handed over to the Jesuits! For the next half-century they could do nothing but make furtive visits to England and Scotland in heavy disguise—one as a money-lender (apparently an early joke on the Scots), another as a military officer, and so on —until a few of them made a brave show under Elizabeth and earned the martyr's crown which as a rule they energetically avoided. Father Campion, under torture, betrayed a number of English Catholics. Most of them were up to the neck in political plots against Elizabeth.

A rather amusing squabble among the martyrs occurred in 1587. Father Weston was captured and sent to Wisbeach Castle for detention. A number of ordinary (secular) priests were already there, and the Jesuit at once tried to get command of the little colony of angels. England was presently amused to hear of the candid comments on each other of the family party. The priests, who were trying to keep a few sparks of their faith alive in England, hated the Jesuits and begged Rome not to send them. Priests were more or less tolerated in England, even under Elizabeth, until the Jesuit plotters, in their picturesque disguises, came along.

Father Weston was therefore told in good medieval English what the priests thought of his pretensions, and he was roundly accused of fraudulent practices, with paid accomplices, to impose on the piety of the faithful; which seems to have been true. He retorted that the secular priests were so addicted—even while they awaited the crown of martyrdom—to drunkenness, gambling, and impurity that he had to get a corner of the prison for himself. The government later transferred the quarrel to the Elysian Fields, but it is piquant that Queen Elizabeth herself took an interest in it, and set four of the priests at liberty in order that they might go and complain to the Pope!

There was the same acrid quarrel in nearly every country to which the Jesuits were sent. From the start they were hated, as they are today, by most of the other clergy. What Rationalist and Protestant writers have said of them is not a whit worse than what devout Catholic priests have said for four centuries.

I must, however, before leaving the English Jesuits, say a word about the famous "Gunpowder Plot." Catholic attempts to belittle this foul plot to murder the King, the royal family, and the Lords and Commons (Deputies) of England when the Parliament was to be solemnly opened in 1604, are preposterous and silly manipulations of an undisputed historical fact. The only question is how far the English Jesuits were implicated in this proposed large-scale murder. I have shown in my book, and it is allowed by all but Jesuits, that Father Garnet, whose wriggles to extricate himself from the guilt are something new in the annals of martyrdom, admitted that he was consulted, with sufficient clearness, about a plot which would entail the killing of innocent people and he then learned the full details of the plot from another Jesuit. These two Jesuits would have crushed the design if they had firmly declared it criminal, but they feared to offend the laity by condemning it, and they, as far as they were concerned, let the diabolical conspiracy run on. The knowledge was *not* obtained "under the seal of confession," as some writers say.

Crétineau-Joly says that more than a hundred Jesuits were executed in England under Elizabeth. I have shown that during that time there were not more than a score of Jesuits in England, and this number includes certain priests who were induced to join the Society in prison, so that it could count them as "Jesuit martyrs." Only five regularly admitted Jesuits were put to death, and two Jesuits purchased their lives by turning informers. Truly a glorious record.

Still more deeply stained with blood is the record of the Companions of Jesus in Germany. In the early stages of the Reformation they had little influence. The Catholics detested them—at Ratisbon the Catholics threatened to throw Father Le Jay into the river—and they retorted with the gravest charges against the monks

and secular clergy. Two of them were at the famous Diet of Worms in 1540, and they reported to Ignatius that there were not three priests in the city who were free from immorality or crime. The Protestant historian who wishes to vindicate the strong language of Luther or Zwingli will find astonishing material in the published (Latin) letters of the Jesuits.

When war broke out at length, the Jesuits marched with the troops as they did in France, and inflamed them. Then the emperor proclaimed a temporary peace and compromise, to the fiery and outspoken anger of Father Boabdilla, and for some time the Jesuits had to confine themselves to the preservation of the faith in the Catholic provinces, where they incurred the usual hatred of the faithful. Their college at Vienna was sacked by a Catholic mob, and loathsome stories about them were current in Bavaria. But from our point of view we are chiefly interested in the fierce sectarian struggle, the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) which wrecked the new prosperity of a very large part of Europe and again suspended the development of civilization. Bohemia had its population reduced from three million to seven hundred and eighty thousand, and there were parts of the continent where unburied corpses lay so thick that the regions had to be avoided until nature had done its work with the putrefying bodies of the dead.

The war began in Bohemia, from which the Jesuits had been scornfully expelled, and so we are not surprised that the camp-followers of the ruthless Tilly, when he came to subdue the country, included eighteen Jesuits. All through the war they kept with the troops, and in places even fought with them. But of their guilt in shaping the counsels of the aggressive Catholic monarchs we will not expect to find documentary evidence. They had influence everywhere. Tilly had passed through the first stages of becoming a Jesuit. Ferdinand II, Maximilian of Bavaria, and Wallenstein had been trained in their schools. There was hardly a Catholic court where they did not intrigue for influence, and the Jesuit writer who will suggest that they used it in the interests of peace has still to be born.

From the Roman side we have a clearer view of their complicity. General Lainez attended the Council of Trent in 1562, when the monarchs with mixed populations were in favor of granting toleration. Lainez fought with fiery zeal against this and urged, wherever Catholic power was available, the extermination of heretics. If the civil power was bound, at the dictation of the Inquisition, to take the lives of individual heretics or batches of heretics, what different principle was involved in exterminating thousands? Had not the greatest of the Popes, Innocent III, caused the slaughter of whole populations of Albigensians? It is almost ludicrous to attempt to clear the Jesuits in view of general Catholic principles and their own special zeal, but we have specific evidence

which I have given in my "Crises in the History of the Papacy."

The German emperor, upon whom chiefly depended the fate of the Reformers, wanted a General Council of the Church in which the dissenting and the orthodox divines should argue, on an equal footing, as to what the Christian faith really was. The Reformers were more than willing, if the Council were not presided over by the representatives of the Pope and if they were met on equal terms. But the Papacy never for a moment entertained the idea. The Council was to define doctrine, on the disputed points, in the Papal sense, and then command the secular arm to exterminate all who dissented from its definitions. In other words, the Papacy wanted war. In 1545, before the Council of Trent opened, Pope Paul III secretly promised the emperor very strong support in men and money if he would make war on the Protestant princes, and then betrayed the emperor's design to do so to the Protestants. The Pope was not a religious man, and he chiefly wanted the restoration and security of a more or less decent luxury for the Papal Court.

So far the Jesuits had not been the chief instruments of the Popes. Ignatius, it is true, whose stern asceticism did not move him to protest against the semi-pagan frivolity and license which the Papal Court still maintained, is known to have been one of the chief instigators of Paul III in reorganizing the bloody apparatus of the Inquisition in Rome; though even Roman Catholic historians admit that the records of the Roman Inquisition are still kept in secrecy (or destroyed), and we do not know how much blood it shed or how much property it confiscated. After Ignatius, however, and except under the reign of Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590), who hated and endeavored to suppress the Jesuits, they found increasing favor with Popes and princes, and they were the chief stimulators of the fiery sectarian hatred which again reduced Europe to a state of semi-savagery. Almost alone the Jesuits denounced the Peace of Westphalia which closed the war. They had, I may add, fiercely attacked Richelieu for keeping France out of the war, yet they induced him, through the king, to stipulate with the Protestant princes that their property should be spared whenever a Catholic town was taken.

THE END AND THE MEANS

What is characteristic of the Jesuits from the beginning, we already see, is a certain ruthlessness in the choice of means to attain their ends. So positive and widespread is the conviction that they held that the end justifies the means that their name has been given, in nearly every Christian tongue, to practices which seem to rest upon that maxim. We call them Jesuitry. Their explanation is that their success, their service to the Roman faith, their remarkable ability and learning, have brought upon them an especial measure

of odium. Why the odium should take precisely this shape, and why it was as virulent in Catholic circles in every century as amongst Protestants and Freethinkers, they have never explained.

The real indictment of the Jesuits is, not that they *said*, but that, as their actions show, they *held* that the end justifies the means. You will, of course, not find the express statement by any Jesuit moral theologian that the "end justifies the means." To enunciate thus openly a principle which would bring upon them a storm of abuse from Catholic theologians as well as non-Catholic moralists is very far indeed from the customs of the Jesuits.

Nor is it very profitable to discuss what we might claim to be disguised or partial admissions of the maxim. The closest approach to the formula is Busenbaum's: "If the end is lawful to a man, the means are lawful"; and Wagemann's: "The end determines the probity of the act." But the context shows that Busenbaum was not laying down a general principle, and Wagemann assumed that the "act" was not in itself immoral. Count von Hoensbroech once took up a Catholic challenge in the matter, and went to court with a claim that he had quoted Jesuits formulating the maxim. The German court held that he had not formally proved his case. His discussion of the subject—and as an ex-Jesuit and a fine scholar he is the best authority—may be read in his "Fourteen Years a Jesuit" (ii, 320) and his little German work "Der Zweck heiligt die Mittel" (1904).

We come nearer to admissions when we examine in detail some of the remarkable opinions of their casuists. In the seventeenth century the Jansenists (Catholic Puritans) of France waged a long and bitter war against them on account of the way in which they prostituted moral principles, and the famous and pious Pascal punished them with one of the most scathing exposures ever published ("Letters to a Provincial," 1656, etc.). Six of these letters consist mainly of statements—not verbal quotations, as a rule, so that Jesuit criticism of them is futile—of doctrine in Jesuit works, and they are from the modern point of view most blatant assumptions that the end justifies the means. Crétineau-Joly quotes Chateaubriand, calling Pascal's work "an immortal lie," and the modern Catholic is invariably told this. But I have shown in my book that, as the Jesuits well know, Chateaubriand generously recognized his error in later years. "I am," he said, "now forced to acknowledge that he [Pascal] has not in the least exaggerated."

I cannot quote here more than a few of these pretty flowers of morality which Pascal and his friends culled from the voluminous works of Jesuit theologians, but some specimens which are beyond criticism must be given, with the name of the theologian after each. The exact references are given in Pascal.

In dealing with the Church law of fasting on certain days it is said that a man who has exhausted himself by vice need not fast;

and other writers show the Jesuits excusing from the law a wife who fears that fasting will reduce her charms in the eyes of her husband (Tamburini), a husband who finds that it diminishes his power of enjoying his wife (Filliutius), and a maid who believes that it interferes with her attractiveness to possible suitors. When I add that the Jesuit theologians all held that one could follow the opinion of *one* theologian against fifty others who took a stricter view, the popularity of Jesuit confessors is fairly explained.

Some of them held that a servant (or a chaplain) who was convinced he was underpaid might dip secretly into his master's cashbox (Bauny). Others held that, where a serious scolding in case of refusal would follow, a valet might hold the ladder, and give other assistance, when his master went to commit adultery. It was, said others, quite lawful to fight a duel if one incurred dishonor by refusing (Escobar); to pray to God for the death of a threatening enemy (Hurtado); to kill a man who spread calumnies about you, and also his untruthful witnesses (Molina); to search for and kill a man who has struck you a blow, provided you do not act out of vindictiveness (Escobar); and it was lawful for a monk (or Jesuit) to kill a man who defamed his monastery or his monastic body, if this were the only way to put an end to his conduct (Amico).

Others would permit a judge to accept secret gifts, if they were tendered merely out of gratitude or to encourage him in rendering just verdicts (Molina); a money-lender to exact a sum of money beyond his loan, though the Church then condemned interest as sinful, in the name of gratitude for the loan (Escobar); or a bankrupt secretly to retain money enough for himself and his family to live "decently" (Escobar). Lessius and others held that there was no need, in confessing the sin, to restore money earned by crime or vice; and Filliutius expressly said that either "a prostitute, virgin, married woman, or nun" could with safe conscience keep the price of her virtue.

Innumerable quotations of this kind showed that even the most learned theologians of the Jesuit Society put at the disposal of the father-confessors of the Society a body of lax "principles" which easily made them popular with sinners, particularly aristocratic sinners. It is, in fact, enough that Jesuits "kept the consciences" during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (until they were suppressed) of nearly all the immoral princes in Europe as well as of their paramours and of the thoroughly immoral nobles and ladies of the court. Catholic theology stipulates that the confession of a sin is useless unless the penitent promises at the time never to repeat it, yet these aristocratic Jesuit confessors all over Europe had too fine an appreciation of human nature, when it was clad in silk or velvet, to insist on this harsh and unreasonable requirement. Louis XIV and Louis XV were on the best of terms

with their father-confessors. Crétineau-Joly lies again when he says that one of the confessors of Louis XIV gave him no rest about his vices, according to the skeptical Bayle. What any person can find, and the pro-Jesuit writer did find, in Bayle's "Dictionary" is that the statement is the reverse of the truth. Three Jesuits in succession shaped the "conscience" of Louis XIV during seventeen years of the king's notorious amours; and great were the wealth and power they derived from their corrupt complaisance.

It is obvious that men directing others on these lax principles had long ago abandoned the severe standards of the first half-dozen Jesuits. I have already said that in Portugal they betrayed the inevitable degeneration during the life-time of Ignatius; and the diplomatic ways of the saint were in part responsible. Portugal was then a rich and great kingdom, though just entering upon its decline. King John III, a stupid pietist, invited the Jesuits, and the dry rot spread more rapidly. Against the rule of "humility" Ignatius let the king have a Jesuit confessor and a Jesuit tutor at court and he was disposed to let him have a Jesuit head of the Inquisition. The result was that within five years the Jesuit college in the capital was reported to Rome as being very corrupt, and it was with difficulty reformed.

In Italy itself degeneration was not slow in appearing. In 1561 the fathers were driven out of Venice and Naples for their attention to ladies. At Milan two years later there was a furious storm when the Jesuit college and its fathers were found to be tainted with unnatural vice. The Jesuit confessor of the cardinal-archbishop was said to be enamored with the page of a noble lady, and he was, in fact, deprived of his post and condemned to the foreign missions.

By 1581 the Jesuits were very numerous and prosperous, and corruption was announced from all sides. At Rome one of the chief Jesuits was condemned by a commission of the Society. In Spain a Jesuit, Mariana, wrote a scorching work on the "excessive and scandalous enjoyments" of the wealthy Jesuit houses in that country. In 1586 a Spanish Jesuit, Hernandez, wanted to leave the Society, and, when the General refused him a license, he reported to the Spanish Inquisition that this was to prevent him from telling the secret of certain Jesuit gallantries. The Inquisition at once put four of the leading Spanish Jesuits in its prison, seized their documents and began an ominous examination of the rules and practices of the secret Society.

The General of the Society at Rome tried to avert the ruin of his body in Spain—for the exposure would have been sensational—by inducing the Pope to see that the Inquisition was encroaching upon his province in this inquiry. Catholic Spain was so bitter against the corrupt and intriguing Jesuits that it even fought the Pope for a time. But Pope Sixtus V was a man of fiery energy, and he wanted those documents for himself. He loathed the Jesuits and

was determined to destroy them—less than a half century after their foundation. The documents he now read utterly shocked him, and he ordered that the name of the Society should be altered and its procedure thoroughly reformed. It is a long story how the Jesuits, the special humble servants of the Pope, now fought Sixtus V with every means in their power, and obstructed his designs until he died. Rome was convinced that they poisoned the Pope, but that seems to me improbable. The Pope's death was expected at any time.

The degeneration steadily continued. In 1654 a very remarkable work, the "Teatro Jesuitico," believed to have been written by a Dominican monk, gave the world once more a piquant picture of their wealth, intrigues, and vices. Only a few years before, the Jesuit house at Seville had failed for a sum of half a million dollars, a debt incurred by borrowing the money from the faithful and investing it in wild speculations. The creditors closed fiercely on them, and the higher court of Spain declared their conduct "infamous." The Jesuits of Spain generally were very wealthy, yet they allowed their house at Seville to go bankrupt and cheat the people from whom they had extorted the money.

TWO CENTURIES OF JESUITRY

The Jesuits contrive to disarm the few among the Catholic laity—the clergy knew them too well—who ever venture to read genuine history, by protesting that this is all calumny. And certainly there has been calumny. Two Popes are said to have been poisoned by them—said by Catholics as well as Rationalists—but the charge is scarcely reasonable. There has been little trouble to understand their psychology, as I explain it here. Probably the majority of them have been, and are (I have personally known many of them), tolerably religious priests with quite ordinary ideas of moral principle. The summit of their intrigues is to secure the favor for their Society of wealthy women, and to maintain for themselves the reputation for learning which some writers ludicrously award them. As I have known them, they are as ignorant as Catholic priests generally are, and not even one in fifty of their writers is a scholar.

As to what are called the "typical Jesuits," the plotters, the lovers of melodramatic adventure, their history is certainly crowded with such. But the psychology of them is not obscure. The historical circumstances in which their Society was founded very largely gave them their peculiar complexion: secrecy, intrigue, and a readiness to approve bloodshed. The time had gone by when the Papacy or the Inquisition could crush heretics, except in Catholic lands. War or large-scale massacres were now the only effective means by which Rome could hope to regain its lost provinces; and to arrange such things all the secrecy and intrigue of diplomacy were required.

The personality of Ignatius was a further shaping influence. To gain the ends of the Church now one needed *power*, and so the favor of the powerful and wealthy; and that suited his temperament. So the chief trait of the new Society was the use of intrigue to get wealth and power.

Moreover, once the shock of the Reformation had passed the acute stage, Catholic countries became as immoral as they had ever been, and the Jesuits saw that they would lose the rich and noble if they insisted on strict principles. This led them to develop casuistry as no body in the world had ever before developed it. Every prince and gentleman knew that he might safely allow his mistress to have a Jesuit confessor. He would not lose her. Practically, as I said, they proceeded on the maxim, which they never formulated as such, that the end justifies the means.

As early as 1574 this casuistic disposition led to one of those clerical adventures which are peculiar to the Jesuits and are despised by all other priests. Sweden had become Protestant and was sternly closed against Catholic priests. The Jesuits first sent one of their number into the country thinly disguised as a foreign envoy. His mission was entirely fruitless—as I said, the Jesuits were very poor at proselytizing by argument—but the Swedes dare not touch an envoy. Then, the Jesuit chronicles themselves boast, Father Nicolai disguised himself as a Lutheran teacher and actually got an appointment in the chief Lutheran college at Stockholm. The man must quite certainly have lied about his beliefs and must have mendaciously taught the Lutheran creed, for he held the chair of theology: he even became rector of the college and sustained his extraordinary lies for a considerable period.

Equally mendacious and still more picturesque was the conduct of Father de Nobili in 1605. He joined the mission in India, then mysteriously isolated himself from it and learned the most intimate details of the Hindu religion. Presently he turned up amongst the Hindus, dressed in a flame-colored robe and a tiger's skin, with all the marks and emblems of the sacred caste of the Saniassi. When challenged, he swore that he was of high caste, and he produced a document proving that he was Tatuva Podagar Swami. Naturally, once he had thus, by a whole pack of lies, won the confidence of the Hindus, he began to make secret converts. The scandalized archbishop had him recalled to Rome, to appear before the Inquisition, but the influence of the Jesuits was such that he got permission to resume his work in India. His dress and caste-practices had, he said, only a social and sanitary significance! In the daily lies which his position implied no Jesuit finds anything to blame. The end justified the means. Other Jesuits followed him. It was claimed that de Nobili made a hundred thousand high-caste converts, and another Jesuit thirty thousand. But in a more precise Jesuit document we read that one of the most astute of these pious

tricksters converted only nine Brahmans in eight months, and that this was more than any colleague had done in ten years. They lied in Europe about their lies in India.

In time the Jesuits quite openly lived as Brahmans among the Hindus, traveling in gaudy palanquins with natives cooling them with fans of peacock feathers. One, Father Beschi, won a native prince, became his chief minister, and rode about with an escort of thirty horses and a band. Others became pariahs and wandered about with a few dirty rags on them. The news exalted the pious ladies of Europe, especially when prodigious figures of conversions were thoughtfully added to the story; but priests and laymen were scandalized, and a fresh fierce attack was made on the Jesuits.

Both in China and India they made converts by blending the native superstitions with a discreet selection of Christian doctrines. When hot-blooded Indian women refused to exchange the little golden *lingam* (male organ) they wore at their breasts for a cross, the good Jesuits were content to engrave a cross on the treasured phallus! Other Jesuits held that wearing the sexual emblem of the Hindu deity was an innocent social custom, or that the woman had merely to convert it into a pious Christian act by a "direction of intention." Every variety of native superstition was thus consecrated, until the Papacy, after a prodigious struggle, was shamed by the jeers of the increasing skeptics of Europe into suppressing the "Chinese and Malabar rites." The "converts" melted away at once.

The Jesuits at Rome used all their influence to protect these corrupt practices, and the reason was not merely that they might be able to boast of their hundreds of thousands of converts. For a hundred years they sanctioned this conduct of their missionaries in China and India, and, as usual, they fought the Pope and his Legates doggedly when they were ordered to desist. For ten years after their condemnation by Pope Clement XII they sustained their practices in the east, and Benedict XIV had in turn to issue two stern and indignant Bulls against them. The chief reason was that they were doing a most prosperous trade on the strength of their missionary work. A manager of the French East India Company's branch at Pondicherry in the eighteenth century said that they did a larger and more profitable business in India than either the English or the Portuguese merchants. On the books of his own company a single debt of one hundred thousand dollars stood in the name of the Jesuit Father Tachard.

And here we have the meaning of the famous Jesuit settlements in Paraguay. They were admitted to the country early in the seventeenth century and, as the Spaniards had treated the natives with extreme brutality, the Jesuits soon won their devotion by the wiser policy of humanely organizing them for industrial purposes. Unquestionably their settlements were ideal in comparison with the brutal exploitation of the natives by Spanish laymen; but just

as unquestionably it was merely another form of commercial exploitation, and, when Spain ceded part of the territory to the Portuguese, the Jesuits threw native armies in bloody warfare upon the Christian troops. The natives were in many respects harshly treated and they received no wages. The Jesuits, says their literary tool Crétineau-Joly, "did not think it proper to give ideas of cupidity to Christians"; so they kept them themselves. They defied the bishops and almost surpassed the audacity of their colleagues in any other part of the world. And they became mighty rich by their unselfish labors in South America.

Another side of their activity, which no less betrays how they acted on the maxim that the end justifies the means, is seen in their readiness to approve assassination, to which I have previously referred. After tasting blood in the Bartholomew Massacre and the religious wars, they lost any primeval horror of it that they may have experienced. When the French king who ruled at the time of the massacre was himself murdered, Father Mariana spoke of the event as a "memorable spectacle, calculated to teach princes that godless enterprises do not go unpunished." Father Commolet, the chief Jesuit at Paris and an influential preacher, theatrically called for "a second Ehud" to assassinate Henry of Navarre, then a Protestant Prince and aspirant to the throne. The Jesuits threw themselves with all their energy into the political and military league against Henry, and, when he became king and a Catholic, they, against the Pope's express orders, rendered important services to him and protested that they had worked in the league against him only to dampen its ardor! But, when within a year, two pupils of the Jesuits attempted to assassinate the new king, and most compromising documents were found in their house, their leader was executed and the Society was expelled from France, to the intense joy of most of the people.

CHAPTER XXX

The Conflict Between Science and Religion

The Historical Conflict—Is There a Conflict Today?—
The Twilight of the Gods

The Historical Conflict

SCIENCE has, ever since its birth, been in conflict with religion. Apart from the astronomical observations of the Babylonian and Chaldean priests, which had the ecclesiastical aim of helping them to keep a calendar, science began in the Greek colonies on the coast of Asia Minor. On that beautiful and healthful fringe of coast the first Europeans to be civilized, the early Greeks, learned the rudiments of knowledge from Persians and Cretans and Egyptians, and their fresh and energetic minds at once perceived that tradition was entirely wrong and man must begin to acquire knowledge by using his own reason and senses. Since these early Greeks formed colonies in Asia, away from the main tribes in Greece, they had a certain amount of liberty; and it is a universal truth of history that where there are liberty and the spirit of inquiry, religion begins to decay. But, as we see in what remains of the speculations of these early pioneers of science, the liberty was restricted. They were clearly in bad odor with their religious neighbors. The way they talk about the gods and spirits shows fairly clearly that they had to trim their sails. The more outspoken of them were chased from city to city, in the name of the gods.

When some of them at last reached the great city of Athens, they found religious prejudice against science much worse. Athens has a brilliant record in everything except science, in which it has no record at all. Anaxagoras, who tried to found a scientific school there, had to fly for his life. The Athenian philosophers found it advisable to despise science and to devote themselves to "spiritual realities"; though even this did not save Socrates from death on the charge of impiety.

A few centuries later the work of science was resumed, under more favorable auspices, in the Greek-Egyptian city of Alexandria. Here there were so many religions and gods that it would escape notice whether a man worshiped or not. Science made very material progress. The mind of the race seemed at last to have entered upon its proper development. But, alas, a new religion, Christian-

ity, got political power, murdered the last brilliant representative of Greek thought, Hypatia, and completely extinguished scientific research. The first thousand years of science, from Thales to Hypatia, were conspicuously marked by conflict with religion, and of all the religions Christianity was the most deadly opponent.

Science began again in Europe. For several centuries it was quite extinct: rather, it was in the condition of those animalcules which live in the rain-gutter of your house, flourish on rainy days, feed and breed, and then, as the moisture disappears, shrink into their skins, so to say, and become mere dry specks of dust until the next rain comes. The ideas of the Greeks thus lingered in Greek literature, but in the Christian Greek Empire no one dreamed of reanimating them. The beneficent shower of rain came with the new Arab civilization; not on account of its Mohammedan religion, but very clearly in spite of it. Skepticism appeared with remarkable rapidity in Bagdad and Damascus, and science revived with just the same rapidity. The ideas of the Greeks were taken out of their tomb in Greek literature, and commerce with China brought new scientific ideas to Persia and Syria.

Then this culture was carried across northern Africa to Spain, and the Moors developed it with a brilliance that reminds us of the ancient Athenians. Next, the Jews and a few Christian wandering scholars took translations of Arab works to Italy, France, and England; and, as the Mohammedans had settled also in Sicily and the south of Italy, a similar stream poured northward from there. Christian Europe began to cultivate science, in spite of the Fathers; and naïve modern Christians, who know nothing about the history of these matters, clap their hands and say: Look at our Roger Bacon, our Albert the Great, our Gerbert, and so on.

We looked at them. We found that from Bacon to Copernicus they all merely repeated what Greeks or Moors had told them, and that, the moment they opened their mouths, the modern conflict between science and religion began. Bacon spent nearly half his adult life in his monastic prison; Albert was extinguished with a mitre; Gerbert with a tiara; Copernicus dreaded to publish his conviction that Pythagoras was right until he was beyond the reach of the Inquisition; Arnold of Villeneuve was hounded from land to land; Friar Jean de Roquetaillade died in prison; Cecco d'Ascoli and Giordano Bruno were burned; Galileo was smitten on the mouth by the Inquisition; Vesalius narrowly escaped its holy wrath, and so on, and so on.

At last authority in Christendom was weakened by the great schism, and the world became sufficiently enlightened to see that one need not be burned at the stake for studying chemistry, physics, astronomy, or anatomy; though such work was generally held to be a damnable waste of time. With the nineteenth century a new phase opened. The Deists had attacked the crudities and inconsis-

tencies of the Old Testament, and scientific men now began to reconstruct the real history of the earth and of man on lines which were very different from those of Genesis.

And whenever they opened up a new path of research, they, as Huxley said, found a notice-board: "No road. By order of Moses." Had the rocks been gradually formed by deposits in water? How old was the earth? How old was man? What was the origin of the stars, the plants, the animals, man, language, religion, the moral sense, civilization? No road. It was all settled by the Old Testament.

A common statement is that there never was a conflict between religion and science, but there were skirmishes, in the "no man's land" between the two, of adventurous representatives of each side. This would have to be characterized as downright dishonesty if those who say it knew what they were talking about. The science of the middle of the nineteenth century formally, as science, taught that the earth had been formed gradually during tens of millions of years; that man was certainly tens of thousands of years old; that languages had been evolved; that living things had been on this earth for millions of years; and that there never had been an interruption of life by a great deluge. Religion, just as formally and officially, taught the opposite. To talk of a few combative theologians sparring with a few combative scientists about these matters is utter historical untruth. What every Church and all its representatives then said about these matters was expressly opposed to what science taught. The Modernist who holds that the legends of creation, Adam, Eden, Babel, etc., are not religion should either hold his tongue about the earlier conflict or explain that to his clerical grandfathers these things *were* religion—and not "theology," as White says.

Next, the religious people who dismiss this earlier conflict with the light-hearted assurance that their grandparents were unfortunately mistaken as to what religion really implied, are equally fallacious and untruthful. No one has any right whatever to put a new interpretation of the plain words of the Bible. The early chapters of Genesis, which I have read in the Hebrew, are accurately translated on the whole. It is only when the crude old Jewish writers begin to talk about "loins" and "thighs," and so on, that the translator has concealed the real meaning. To put any other than the obvious interpretation on the early chapters of Genesis is—well it is too absurd to be improper. "Progressive revelation" is the veriest piece of bunk that Modernism ever invented. The Bible writers, whoever they were, meant what they said, and the Jews have so understood them for twenty-five hundred years. Putting a new interpretation on their words "in the light of science" is not "interpreting" at all. It is a dreary sort of jig-saw-puzzle game, in which you find a lot of words in the modern

scientific dictionary which cover the same ground as the Hebrew text and mean precisely the opposite.

The third and quite modern stage is to quit the "interpretation" game and say either that the Bible contains no revelation or that there is no religious obligation to consider it in regard to facts of science or history. But the person who thinks that by adopting this attitude he entirely escapes the unpleasantness of the conflict of science and religion must be extremely superficial. Is the fall of man a truth of religion or a statement about prehistoric life which interests science? If the former, there is a deadly conflict. The unanimous teaching of science is opposed to it. If the latter—if it is one of those statements of fact which the Christian is not compelled to believe—the foundation of Christianity is an error. A few Modernists may say that they do not admit original sin and an atonement for it, but *they* are not Christianity.

Finally, even the extreme Modernist cannot escape the consequence of the historical conflict. He concedes that every branch of the Christian Church and the Jewish Church taught a great number of errors as religion during the whole of their career. He maintains very strongly, however, that God knows everything and takes a special interest in religion, truth, and Churches. To reconcile these two beliefs is rather harder than reconciling science and Genesis, at which he smiles. The great conflict, instead of being a matter which he can airily dismiss as "a mistake," turns out to be one more very formidable reminder that humanity gets no help from Gods even in religious matters.

Religion changes and grows, he says: just like science, he adds, in a brain-wave. But science grows larger and more confident, while religion grows smaller and less confident. Science reaches unanimity on thousands of points; religion has lost unanimity about everything, even about God. No, you can't dismiss the nineteenth-century conflict with a graceful gesture. It has left a corrosive acid in what remains of religion. However, we are more interested in the question whether, and to what extent, there is a conflict today.

Is There a Conflict Today?

We naturally resent the attitude toward religion of a few American men of science in the present crisis. They were confronted with an *organized* force representing at the most ten or fifteen million people out of a hundred and twenty million: a body, mainly, of men and women who were honestly ignorant of the facts, led by fanatical or professional organizers. Instead of, with dignity and courage, organizing the vast body of teachers in the United States to protect their freedom, and appealing to the general public for support, some of the leaders of American science made an attempt, as futile as it was inglorious, to conciliate

the dervishes by protesting that science is not inconsistent with religion. It is as clear as noonday that it is inconsistent with the religion of the Fundamentalists, which was the real issue.

But for many years, and in more than one country, scientific men of some distinction have been giving the world this assurance that there is no conflict between science and religion. In England and Germany quite a number of scientific men have stated this. Sir E. Ray Lankester, one of the most eminent of British men of science, has actually contributed that assurance to a work in defense of Christianity compiled by the Christian Evidence Society, and has in a Rationalist paper acridly resented my own statement that there is a conflict.

If any reader is really puzzled by this attitude of scientific men like Lankester, Osborne, Pupin, and Millikan, it will help him if I explain the position of Lankester. That distinguished and venerable zoologist resolutely refuses to say what he believes in regard to religion, and he sourly resents any person saying it for him. Nevertheless I will, from my own knowledge, explain that he is an Agnostic and has not a particle of religious sentiment. When he says that science is consistent with religion he means with the *ethical* teaching of Christianity. Even of this he knows so little that on the one occasion on which he discussed it (in the "R. P. A. Annual," 1916) his eulogies of it were so uncritical that the editor returned his manuscript with a timid request that he would take some account of *my* research into the ethics of Jesus!

The case is typical. When these scientific men, who may know all that the world knows about some branch of physics, mathematics, or biology, come to deal with religion, they are as feeble and inaccurate as is a bishop or a Baptist professor who ventures to deal with their sciences. But in the absence of any explicit confession of Christian belief—not a vague assurance that they are "Christians," but a plain statement that they believe literally in the incarnation, atonement, and resurrection—we may safely assume that (as most of them intimate) they mean by religion an ethical idealism or, at the most, a belief in some kind of God. And there you get the first condition for understanding the much discussed theme which is indicated in the title of this chapter. When any man asks you whether there is any conflict between science and religion, ask at once: Which religion do you mean?

One word will suffice as to what we mean by "science." Any statement of fact or any theory in any branch of science which has the support of all the living authorities on the subject and is contained in the received textbooks is quite certainly "science." That is "the teaching of science" in the strictest sense. The fact, for instance, that a teacher in a Seventh Day Adventist College, or a medical man, or a college-teacher of a different branch of science, disputes that statement or theory, makes no difference whatever,

if all the authorities and all the textbooks used in education are agreed on it. That is science. Where the living authorities are divided, the statement of one side, especially of one man, is not "science." Where only two or three stand out against the conviction of the majority of the authorities, we must attach a very high probability to the majority-opinion, but it is not "science" in the sense in which we use the word here. There is a vast body, a whole library, of truth which is "science" in this sense, and a very great deal of it is in deadly conflict with what most people call their religion.

Let us understand this again quite plainly. There is a certain possible ambiguity here, and both theologians and some men of science avail themselves of it. They deceive their readers and are to that extent as crooked as the politician who takes a bribe.

The ambiguity will be best seen by an example. Science unanimously teaches that man was evolved from an ape-like ancestor, and that he has made continuous slow progress, with long periods of stagnation, since early Miocene days (something like twenty million years ago, on the new estimate). This is totally inconsistent with the beliefs that man was created, that he was originally a very superior being and "fell," and that the course of human affairs was afterwards interrupted by a deluge and a miraculous confusion of tongues. But it is not the business of science to *affirm* this inconsistency or to say a word about creation, fall, deluge, or Babel. This is a simple instance, and the inconsistency is so plain to the eye that hardly anyone will venture to say there is "no conflict." There are, however, more serious inconsistencies, and we must keep the principle clear. The question is not whether science officially *denies* religious statements but whether what science teaches conflicts with what religion teaches.

But how in the name of all that is wonderful are you going to settle what religion teaches? I forget how many religions there are in America, and in any case a few are certain to have arisen since the last enumeration. And that is not the whole difficulty. In any one sect there are fifty or a hundred shades of belief. I will guarantee to quote a hundred different "religious beliefs," from Pantheism to a Pope-less Catholicism, in the American Episcopal Church alone. No major Church now insists on a literal acceptance of all its formulae; and amongst the minor sects one finds Unitarian churches, for instance, in America which openly state that no belief at all is imposed as a condition of membership, yet they exist for the cultivation of "religion."

If, therefore, you want a thorough answer to the question whether the teaching of science conflicts with religion, it looks as if we shall have to take three hundred different collections of religious beliefs and apply science to them. Thanks for the good

intention, you will say. We would rather collect stamps, oyster-shells, or silk stockings.

There is, however, a way out of the difficulty. We can take a few leading types of religious belief or a few common doctrines. It will, in fact, suffice if we take the two leading types, the Fundamentalist and the Modernist. In this section I will show that the characteristic Fundamentalist doctrines are blatantly in conflict with received and established science. I will then show that the doctrines of God and the soul, which are common to all religions that demand any specific belief at all, are less openly, but very seriously, discredited, by the teaching of science. Finally we shall see that even the most advanced and ultra-Modernist religions which dispense with a personal God (or even impersonal) and leave open the question of immortality, still lie in the path of advancing science. Any *belief* or *statement*, as distinct from sentiment, which calls itself religious, is in conflict with the teaching of science.

The Fundamentalist beliefs I have dealt with in various other chapters, and I must simply summarize here what I have said, and add a few further considerations. There is absolute unanimity amongst the scientific experts on the fact of evolution, and the conflict here is deadly and notorious. Not one single *living* writer, not one who has lived within the last twenty years, quoted in Fundamentalist literature as opposed to evolution, is an authority on the subject. MacCready Price is merely a teacher of geology—and he has only been a few years at that—in a Seventh Day Adventist College in a backward State. The other writers quoted, if they are not men who died decades ago, are teachers of physics (which has nothing to do with the subject) or medical men. Evolution is "science" in the very strictest sense of the word.

Genesis is completely irreconcilable with science on a score of points apart from evolution, and Genesis, as we have it, was certainly not written until a thousand years after the alleged time of Moses and is a fraudulent compilation. The legends which are found in the first few chapters of Genesis were borrowed from the Babylonians.

The Fundamentalist may be invited to use his fundamental common sense. On the one hand are a few professors of divinity of poor intellectual standing and a large number of preachers of no intellectual standing whatever: on the other hand are not only the majority of the more learned theologians of the world but the united and unanimous experts in astronomy, biology, physiology, zoology, geology, psychology, anthropology, and archeology. The experts and professors of the eight sciences concerned are quite unanimous. My experience amongst the Fundamentalists is that they, as a rule, merely need to be undeceived on this point. Their

literature grossly deceived them into thinking that scientists are themselves not agreed about evolution.

If it were a question of a single point, evolution, as Fundamentalists generally imagine, it is just conceivable that a man might for a time suspend his judgment, but the situation is very different from this. While eight sets of experts prove evolution, another set prove by its internal evidence that the Pentateuch was not written until about 500 B. C.: another set derive from the ruins of Babylonia and Assyria legends of creation, Eden, fall, and deluge so closely corresponding to the Hebrew legends that no one can doubt their identity: another set show that the history of the race has been quite different from the story of the Old Testament. And so on. Against this mass of evidence accumulated by independent bodies of the most highly trained students in the world, the Fundamentalist can only put . . . . what? In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he could not even tell you why he believes the Old Testament to be "the Word of God."

Nor must we forget that the story which is thus assailed by science in its beginning in Genesis is equally assailed in its culmination in the New Testament. The science of comparative religion shows us the origin in the older pagan religions of the stories of Christ's miraculous birth, atoning death, and resurrection. These stories were not part of the first Christian tradition, but were added to it.

Therefore the position, not merely of the Fundamentalist and the Roman Catholic, but of any Christian who holds the Church doctrines of the creation and fall of man, and the miraculous birth, atoning death, and resurrection of Christ, is quite plain. He is in flat and flagrant conflict with science. Amateur theologians like Osborne and Pupin easily forget that comparative religion is a science as truly as biology is. They talk nonsense when they say that "science" has no bearing on the virgin-birth and the resurrection. The science of comparative religion gives us just such stories centuries older than Christianity; and the issue is, as we saw, not whether any science *declares* itself inconsistent with Christianity, but whether what it teaches is so consistent or not.

I am not concerned here with believers who put new interpretations on the old doctrines of creation, original sin, atonement, resurrection, etc. I share the scorn of the Fundamentalist for such things. They mean, in plain American, that the Christian doctrines have been abandoned. In one of my works ("The Religion of Sir Oliver Lodge," 1914) I analyzed the various professions of faith of a British scientist who, while holding Spiritualistic views, declares himself a member of the Church of England and is, I understand, often flatteringly invited to read the lessons in Birmingham Cathedral. And this is how, from the study of his works, I find him accepting the simplest of the creeds:

I believe in God—a God who is one with Nature,
The Father Almighty—but not all-powerful,
Creator of Heaven and Earth—which were not created, but are eternal,
And in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord—who is, however, a son of God only in the same sense as we, but more so,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost—as an artist conceives his work, not miraculously,
Born of the Virgin Mary—who was not a virgin,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried—not to atone for the sins of the world.
He descended into hell—which does not exist;
The third day he rose again from the dead—or his soul made a new body out of ether.
He ascended into heaven—or made a final phantasmal appearance.
Sitteth on the right hand [which doesn't exist] of God the Father Almighty [who is not Almighty]—though there is no heaven to sit in.
From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead—that is to say, he will persuade them to judge themselves.
I believe in the Holy Ghost—which is a figure of speech,
The Holy Catholic Church—certainly not the Roman, and the Anglo-Catholic only as long as it imposes no belief on me,
The communion of saints—by telepathy,
The forgiveness of sins—each man forgiving himself,
The resurrection of the body—which certainly won't rise again,
And life everlasting—which may not last forever; we don't know.

I understand that Sir Oliver Lodge was a little peeved when my very careful reconstruction of his creed appeared. But it is strictly based upon his works, and it is probably the creed of the few other men of any intellectual distinction who call themselves Christians. It is the creed of the extreme Modernists, and on some such lines runs the creed of all who no longer literally accept such doctrines as hell, heaven, atonement, etc. All that we need say here is that they are Christians who believe that Paul and the Christian Church have been wrong in nearly everything until science began to enlighten the world.

With the Fundamentalists the conflict is to the death; and one needs no gift of prophecy to say which combatant will die. The plea of Fundamentalist leaders, that they are not opposed to *true* science, is too transparent an imposture to deceive their followers long. "True science" obviously means the science which does not conflict with their medieval views. They remind one of the early days of the nineteenth century when the Chinese met their aggressors with wooden guns. When Fundamentalists and Catholics realize how they are deceived by the literature put in their hands, how little competent their leaders are to deal with the questions they treat with such levity, how really humorous it is for a handful of preachers, with an eccentric medicine-man here and there, to attempt to tell the united experts of the world what is true and what is false science, the religious world in its entirety will retreat, with great dignity, to "positions prepared in advance."

THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

We cannot examine every Christian sect, every possible temporary position on the line of retreat from Fundamentalism to extreme Modernism, but there is no serious need to make the attempt. There is no logical and respectable position between the two. And the decisive factor in this is science. We have reconstructed the early history of our race, and the truth we have discovered is fatal to the essential message of the Bible and the Christian religion.

Seven thousand years ago there was no civilization on this globe: I mean that there was no branch of the human race sufficiently advanced in intelligence to have discovered that primary and essential requirement of civilized life—written language. In the valley of the Nile, in Mesopotamia, and in Crete men were advancing in the direction of civilization, but it is now usual to put their actual arrival at the civilized stage at about 3000 B. C.; and the Chinese civilization began later, the Mayan still later (about 500 B. C.). There is no doubt that ten thousand years ago no section of the race rose above the level of Neolithic culture; stone weapons, skin clothing, elementary agriculture and pottery.

There is, further, no doubt that fifty thousand years ago no section of the human race rose above the level of the Australian aboriginal of today: a very low type of savage. The earth has been raked from Patagonia to Siberia, from Scandinavia to South Africa, and we have a very good knowledge of the men of fifty to a hundred thousand years ago. And there is just as little room for doubt that with every fifty thousand years that we penetrate into earlier time the race sinks still lower in culture. What we may almost call a geological accident, the formation of flint, led to the recording in every age of man's mental advance. His flint implements, of which we have millions for the last half million years, reflect his degree of intelligence as faithfully as the printed page reflects ours. They are immortal and unalterable.

Thus we may leave the question of the evolution of man entirely out of consideration. It is merely foolish to make that question the main issue in the conflict between science and Genesis. The fundamental and essential Christian doctrine is not based upon the *creation*, but upon the *fall* of man, upon a certain version of man's early history. And whether or no man was evolved from an ape-like creature, the scientific record of his slow development *as man* is fatal to the legend of Eden and the fall. The essential part of the Christian structure of doctrine breaks down when the legend is abandoned. Paul, on whom, rather than on the gospels, theology is based, was entirely wrong. The primeval curse is a Babylonian legend now completely discredited by what science teaches about early man, quite apart from evolution, and therefore a divine redeemer of the race becomes superfluous. When, as I said,

we also take the science of comparative religion into account, belief in the fundamental Christian doctrines becomes impossible.

One word, in passing, to the Modernist. He would talk less foolishly sometimes if he kept clearly in mind the fact that he is in a very small minority. Of the fifty million Christians of America probably forty-nine millions are not Modernists. Let him therefore not say airily that science does not conflict with religion because it does not conflict with his religion. He is one in fifty. I am more concerned about the forty-nine. Moreover, the semi-Modernist might justly be warned to see that new verbiage is not necessarily new thought, and that a book is not necessarily profound because it costs two or three dollars. The land which lies between straight Fundamentalism and straight Modernism is the Land of Bunk.

By straight Modernism I mean the candid admission that the Bible story is wrong—that there was no revelation, no fall of man, and no atoning death—coupled with the claim that there is a God, that he has put in the breast of men a hope of immortality which he may be expected to fulfill, and that Christ and Christianity are the supreme guardians and exponents of the moral law. Science certainly pursues any Christian believer until he reaches that position.

Does the conflict then cease? Of course, say the Modernists and the religious professors. Let us be humble and consider very patiently what these great men condescend to tell us about the matter.

The mischief is that they tell us so very little and say it so very loud. As to Professor Osborne, the high priest of the little tribe of Aaron in the American scientific world, I have shown elsewhere that his "Earth Speaks to Bryan" contains so many errors on vital points that a scientific examiner, if one were, for the fun of the thing, appointed to examine it by the usual academic standards, would not give the author fifty points out of a possible hundred. He is not even correct about science—Cro-Magnon man, for instance—and his proofs that there is a revolt against Materialism in the scientific world are so slovenly and inaccurate that the examiner's blue pencil would wrathfully erase this whole section of his book. And in the end we are left wondering—I mean, some people are left wondering—what particular religious doctrines Professor Osborne really does believe.

Scarcely less arrogant and pompous is the assistant high priest of the group, Professor Millikan, and fortunately he has told us a little more clearly what we are to believe—I mean, what he believes. I have before me an article in "Collier's Weekly" (October 24, 1925) in which the writer gives a (presumably corrected) report of a very serious and solemn talk he had with Professor Millikan.

Compose yourselves, my brethren, and listen to the oracle. For Professor Millikan knows so much about the electron that he thinks he discovered it, and this gives him a very high authority to talk about God. You see the connection, don't you? Not many years ago the preacher used to say that scientific men knew least about spiritual things because they were engaged all day and night groping in the bowels of matter. Now, it seems, the men who grope deepest in the bowels of matter—physicists like Millikan and Lodge—are the most fitted of all scientists to deal with spiritual realities.

Professor Millikan, anyhow, is very positive. "I have never known a thinking man who did not believe in God," he says. Somehow the apologists for the angels have not made much use of that impressive testimony. They like audacity, but . . . Millikan forges ahead. "Men who have the stuff in them which makes heroes all believe in God," he says. Every American soldier in the war, of course, believed in God; though the chaplains reported that nine-tenths of them would have nothing to do with him. It "pains" Professor Millikan when he hears men express "crudely atheistic views." Without religion our age is going to be destroyed by the very powers which science has given it; and, as to a conflict between science and religion, it is "impossible."

Let us see. Conflict is impossible, he says, because the business of science is to accumulate knowledge and the business of religion is "to develop the consciences, the ideals and the aspirations of mankind." Some would say that this development of consciences and ideals is religion, and its sufficient motive is in this present life. After all, if there is a danger of "destruction" unless our ideals are developed, we really have some incentive to developing them. For Professor Millikan religion is based upon belief in a personal God, and this is what we want to test. These skirmishes are, he says, between "men who know very little about science and men who know very little about religion," and the professor who knows a great deal about both is offering the world a profound faith in God which science can never disturb. Let me give it in his own words, for if even Millikan's theism is open to conflict with science, we need hardly go further:

> The more we investigate, the more we see how far we are from any real comprehension of it all, and the clearer we see that in the very admission of our ignorance and finiteness we recognize the existence of a Something, a Power, a Being in whom and because of whom we live and move and have our being—a Creator by whatever name we call Him.

Someone once said that it did not follow that water was deep because you could not see the bottom at a glance: it might be muddy. It seems applicable here. I am, according to Millikan, one

of those "men who have never known the deeper side of existence." We can forgive a mere physicist for not being able to write ordinarily decent English ("deeper side of existence," etc.), but we really have a right to expect cleaner thinking from a mathematician. All that I can distil out of the above verbiage is that we are still very ignorant, which I quite admit, and that because we are so very ignorant there exists a Creator.

Now, supposing that Professor Millikan had some definite idea in his head, it must have been this: that a Power or Being is responsible for our existence, and since we have searched so long and remain so ignorant, that Power must be beyond or behind the universe, and we call it God. And the answer, or answers—for you could shoot all day at this kind of stuff if it were worth it, are short and sharp. First, science is only about a century old, and it is premature to talk about things being "behind the mystery of existence." Secondly, there is no mystery of existence, for existence is an ultimate fact. Thirdly, our "ignorance" expressly forbids us to use such words as "Whom" and "Him" and "Creator" and "God." Fourthly, we have not the slightest reason for talking about anything that "gives meaning to existence." Fifthly, this despiser of atheistic crudities and praiser of his own profundity is just a shade cruder than the most threadbare of God-provers who argues about First Causes. . . .

What Millikan really means, in his muddle-headed way, is that some Power unknown to us explains the universe and its contents. That is bad philosophy and bad science—let me boldly say, bad physics. Powers do not make anything. Power is an abstract idea. Some agencies or agents made the universe what it is. We have an imperfect knowledge of matter and ether as such agents, and Professor Millikan gives us no reason why he should talk of another agency or agencies "beyond and behind" these. His "beyond" and "behind" are simply words he has picked up in sermons. He talks loosely from beginning to end. He drags in Copernicus, who, he says, was "a priest," and was "persecuted"; and he was (though a canon) not a priest and was never persecuted. In any case, Millikan is very obviously basing his whole case on our present ignorance, and he is therefore doing what theologians have done for decades: saying that science cannot (today) explain something, so God must (until tomorrow). The only logical deduction from ignorance is Agnosticism.

And he only makes matters worse when he—in the usual arrogant manner—says that materialism is "altogether absurd and utterly irrational," because "love, duty, and beauty" are *spiritual* things, and tracing these back to his "Power behind Nature," he concludes that this Power is spiritual and personal. It is a platitude of the lower forms in the theological seminary. When did any man

ever prove that they are spiritual? Love is an emotion: duty is an abstract word: beauty is an aspect of material things. At the most, Professor Millikan means that the mind is a non-quantitative reality, which no one has ever proved, while science suggests precisely the contrary. This "profound" thinker, who is assuring the world that conflict between science and religion is an impossibility, at once gives as the second basis of his religion a statement which is actually being used as a target for a hot fire of scientific criticism; and the first basis is an ignorance which his own science is daily striving to overcome!

The arrogance of men who use this empty and ancient verbiage, these moth-eaten pulpit arguments, is amusing; but my chief concern for the moment is, not to refute the arguments, for the thousandth time, but to show the nonsense of all talk about the conflict of science and religion being over. The fine work which Professor Millikan has himself done in physics crowns only a century of research. What will science know about the "powers" of the universe in ten centuries? What will it know a million years from now? Conflict is impossible, he says, because the business of science is to develop knowledge, and the business of religion is to develop ideals; and forthwith he makes his religion a business of *getting knowledge* in parts of the universe which science has not yet illumined!

Nor is this all; but to illustrate the next aspect of this "new scientific religion," which was a platitude in the days of Socrates, I turn to another member of the group of religious scientists, Professor Calkins. I am not aware that Professor Calkins has ever used the arrogant and offensive language we get from Osborne and Millikan—the men who so much fear that our character will deteriorate without religion—but I really cannot take his religion more seriously. I remember years ago, when I was engaged in microscopic work, using a very fine manual on the Protozoa by Professor Calkins. On the title-page was an old German motto, and, as the book is no longer in my library, I must quote it as well as I can from memory:

Les' dieses Buch, und lern' dabei
Wie gross Gott auch in kleinem sei.

Which means: "Read this book and learn from it how great God is even in small things."

I am not going to examine the argument for God which must have been in the mind of Professor Calkins, or to enlarge on the fallacy of it. I do all this in the chapter, "The Futility of Belief in God." As I there state, Professor Calkins' book gives a most admirable description of microscopic animalcules and germs, with excellent illustrations of the apparatus by which they prey on each

other and on man. The most deadly enemies of the human race and of all animals precisely because of their invisibility, the most awful disseminators of poison and pain since man became the nervous creature he is, the causes of most of the worst diseases and suffering in the world . . . . and we are asked particularly and pointedly to see the finger of God in these things! I could understand an Atheist, in irony, putting such a motto on his book, but in a religious scientist it is incomprehensible. And *we* are superficial!

According to these professors Ingersoll was a "superficial" man. When a young lady, carefully nurtured in the deep Millikan-Calkins wisdom, one day said to him: "Colonel, who made these beautiful flowers?" he replied: "The same, my dear young lady, that made the poison of the ivy and the asp." That is as deep as any man need go or can go. It is not at all clear that a "spiritual power" is needed to make flowers and birds of paradise; in fact, it is totally incomprehensible how a spiritual power could, and the more deeply you think the more improbable it becomes. But it *is* clear that loving beings do not put scorpions, poisoned thorns, or hypodermic needles charged with typhus-germs in the path of the children they love.

The shrewder theologians of the last century saw that the most deadly effect of the new science was that it prolonged the tragedy of nature over millions of years. It was the light-headed chanticleers of the pulpit who crowed that evolution was "a more splendid revelation than ever of God's power." The suffering in nature had always saddened really devout minds. When science established that this suffering had gone on for fifty million years, instead of six thousand, the thoughtful believer shuddered. Now, in the last few years, science has established that the tragedy of life has proceeded for something like a billion years. The fact that evolution contradicts Genesis is a feather in comparison with this.

I once, in debate before a Fundamentalist audience, forced Dr. Riley to admit that this story of life on earth during a billion years *might* be true. He smiled as he admitted it, thinking that he could save his face by pleading that the "days" of Genesis were periods of unknown lengths. It did not even occur to him that this meant hundreds of millions of years of ghastly suffering and brutality.

As long as men retain a belief in a personal God, this teaching of science rudely conflicts with it. Evil was always felt to be a hostile element to the belief in God. Evil as formulated by modern science—evil in the shape of myriads of deadly structures playing a vital part in the progress of life during hundreds of millions of years—is far more hostile. No conflict, indeed!

And even if only the first part of Professor Millikan's argument or rhapsody be followed, if the claim is made that, since sci-

ence cannot at present explain the fundamental features of the universe, a power beyond the sphere of scientific investigation must be admitted, there is an essential conflict. It is precisely the business of the man of science to find out if the agencies known to him—ether, matter, force, electrons, or what you like—will explain any and every phenomenon known to us. Every advance he makes dislodges the theologian from a patch of "ignorance." Every lamp that is lit in another dark chamber shows that the ghost is not there. The conflict is continuous, essential, and to the death.

CHAPTER XXXI

Do We Need Religion?

The Fear of the Godly—Our Personal Morals—
The Nightmare of Sex—Religion and Progress

The Fear of the Godly

THE criticism of religion seems to be an unpopular job. I am, as more zealous and self-sacrificing purveyors of skepticism will assure you, really a timid and innocuous person, yet I have had my life threatened in Sydney and have been protected by friendly guns in Denver. I have heard ladies of Minneapolis regret that none had the courage to shoot me, and British Spiritualist clergymen have deplored in their journal *Light,* that I have never yet had the horsewhipping which I have merited. Friends have rushed before me in the streets of London to protect me, they imagined, from a vitriol-thrower, and sailors have been bribed by clergymen of the southern seas to put my luggage ashore a thousand miles away from my destination. I have been forced by the pressure of the Catholic Church on a London publisher to tear up a literary contract worth at least twenty thousand dollars, and have had my books shamelessly misrepresented in the press and expelled, under menaces, from booksellers' shops. Insults, injuries, intrigues, lies, libels, vituperations, depreciations . . . .

But it was all done in the name of religion, so I expect little sympathy. Ages ago there was a small semi-barbaric people called the Hebrews who believed that their fate was indissolubly linked with certain objects mysteriously secreted in a pretty box which they called the Ark of the Covenant. It now seems probable that the sacred objects in the Ark were rough stone models of interesting parts of the masculine anatomy; but mystery was always more entitled to respect than knowledge, and the Hebrew shuddered at the prospect of a conqueror robbing him of his precious Ark. Far away to the north of Judea was the great old city of Troy, and *its* fate also was inviolably linked with a mysterious stone on which none ever gazed: a stone which, we now see, was either a meteorite or a phallic model. And centuries later even the Romans said that they hid this sacred "Palladium" of Troy in one of their temples, and the fate of Rome in turn depended upon its being preserved secret and inviolate.

Religion is the Ark of the Covenant, the Palladium, the magic stone of civilization, and I have dared to lay light hands upon it. Without it, without an awe-stricken veneration for it in the mass of the people, we perish. Every oracle of modern times assures you of that.

The statesman, who naturally knows best on what tangible and intangible threads our destinies hang, tells you, in accents which are vibrant with sincerity, that our people rely upon our devoted clergy for that which is incomparably higher than bread, and therefore places of worship shall forever be immune from the sordid trammels of taxation. Our editors, even if they do at times politely suggest to the clergy that St. Athanasius has not a very clear title to rule our intellects, are fervent and irresistible in their final conclusions that *religion* must inspire our lives. Our wise judges command their gravest gravity when they refer to it. Our educators and financiers cannot conceive a world without it. Our professors and literary men are, of course, superior to the creeds to which statesmen subscribe, but their intellectual serenity and Olympic survey of life restrain them from ever disturbing the allegiance of the millions to *religion*. Only a superficial writer here and there, a half-educated person like myself, a mechanical pen-pusher who has not given to the subject of the truth and value of religion so much profound thought as have our politicians, policemen, colored preachers, editors, mothers-of-seven, zoölogists, and literary critics, would ever dream of challenging the vital importance to us of our Palladium.

Since the days when I began to study for the priesthood, forty-odd years ago, I must have read many thousands of religious books—Hindu, Persian, Chinese, etc., as well as of every Christian sect and every Christian century—and tens of thousands of scientific, historical, philosophical, and sociological works which illumine religion from one angle or another. How is it that I have never been able to see the truth which professors grasp in a few hours spared from bugs, and politicians in a few moments spared from billiards? It irks me. Let me try again.

What *is* religion? Many years ago I had a colleague in the Ethical Culture movement in England who was a very learned and profound philosopher, Professor Bosanquet, and presently he quitted the movement and declared that he had come to the conviction that men could not be good without religion. One was puzzled because the Ethical Culture people say that ethical culture *is* a religion: indeed, the only religion that really does good. However, I looked into Bosanquet's religion, and found that it consisted in a veneration for the Absolute, as set up—not described, since, being absolute, it is incomprehensible—by Professor Hegel (and promptly knocked down again by every other school of philosophers). Then there came into the movement a Professor Höffding,

who was just as learned, and *he* said that the Absolute was as mythical as Moses, and that religion consisted in "the conservation of values." At one meeting of ours George Bernard Shaw was induced to give the sermon, and after withering the religion of everybody else under the sun, he explained authoritatively that the only religion on which we really did depend was the cult of our Vital Principle and vegetarianism. Then Mr. H. G. Wells spoke up and said . . . .

You see the difficulty. A hundred and twenty million people in the United States are convinced that religion is vitally necessary. Seventy millions of these pay much less attention to it than they do to the color of their socks or stockings, but they seem to agree with the editors and politicians that it is of overwhelming importance. Of the remaining fifty millions one-third say that religion is morally futile except in a sacerdotal and sacramental form. Its great service is that it gives "grace," without which you are sure to fail, and only priests can communicate this medicine or magic. The next third of the fifty millions spit their contempt on what the first third call the essential service of religion, and say that the really saving part of religion, the only part that does real good, is to believe that Christ died for your sins and to regard the Old Testament as the Word of God. The third third—Modernists, liberal Episcopalians and Methodists, Congregationalists, and Unitarians—genially rule out both the other thirds and say that the only necessary kind of religion is to believe in the love of a personal God and worship him. And then, at least four-fifths of our most learned men step in and assure us that there is no personal God.

This is the actual situation. I do not in the least caricature it. We might, with the large-heartedness of a politician, whose votes are rained upon him by both the just and the unjust, say that it does not matter which religion we cherish as long as we have some religion. In fact, that is the common attitude on this question. Your neighbor tells you with an air of robust and unanswerable common sense: "They all do good."

That kind of robust common sense is sheer nonsense. How does your friend know that they "do good"? Half his neighbors go to church and half do not. Is there any difference between them? He has a Catholic chapel near him and sees quite a decent lot of folk clustering round it. But the religious ideas are just the same in some poor Irish quarter, some Mexican or European or South American town, which excite his disgust. In Chicago, it is claimed, one million people out of three million are Roman Catholics: in London only a quarter of a million out of eight or nine millions are Roman Catholics. Yet crime is, in proportion to population, thirty times as common in Chicago as in London. The only two countries in the world today in which the settled principles of political morality are outraged—Spain and Italy—are Roman Catholic,

and the other countries which approach the same condition—Austria, Bavaria, Poland, etc.—are Catholic: and in each case the Pope warmly supports the usurpers and persecutors. How can you say that the religion does good?

Let us try to be reasonable with our neighbors. We do not want to score points, but to secure agreement. The first condition of that, however, is that our neighbors must reflect, and not lightly repeat the shibboleths of the political orator or the editorial. For we may rule out at once four classes of influential men who promote the circulation of this fiction that all religions do good and some religion is necessary.

The first class is the politicians. We are, surely, under no illusion here. It is a question of votes, not spirituality. The clergy can secure for a man or take away from him the margin of votes which means victory or defeat.

The second class are the clergy themselves. When they divided the whole community between them they reviled each other's creed. Between them they proved that both the Catholic and the Protestant creeds are at once the only inspiration of life and the most terrible sources of demoralization. When the bulk of the community sensibly concluded that neither seemed to be necessary they united to say that *some* religion is a vital need, and that at all costs we must preserve the old attitude of prejudice against rank unbelief. We quite understand that. Religion is their bread-and-butter. We rule out their opinion.

The third class that we may ignore are certain professors, editors, and literary men who support the fiction. These professors—I will presently consider another class of them who are sincere—are simply afraid of the clergy. Their chairs are threatened, or their freedom to teach science is threatened, or their comfort is threatened. Silence about religion is prudent, but a word in its favor is profitable.

As to the editors, I am sufficiently intimate with the journalistic world to understand them. I have heard a famous journalist, a skeptic, whose graceful professions of Christian faith were read, whenever they appeared, by nearly two million people, say airily, when he was challenged (at a dinner party): "Oh, the people like that sort of thing." Not for a moment do I suggest that any large proportion of editors are as unscrupulous as this. Their general attitude is simply one of trade rivalry. If the *Bugle* attacks religion or fails to favor it, the clergy will see to it that the *Cornet* gets twenty or fifty thousand of its readers. Skeptical readers never trouble editors, but religious readers have an organization behind them. The editors themselves are healthily cynical. When a London journal with seven hundred thousand readers, the *Daily News*, made several years ago a very serious and sustained effort to take a plebiscite of the religious views of its readers, only fifteen thousand

responded, after weeks of intensified advertisement, and four thousand of those were Agnostics.

Of the literary gentlemen, who spend their lives studying each other's style and telling us what to think about it, I would rather say nothing. Is there anything more cynical than the newspaper practice of getting these gentlemen occasionally to give them a symposium on religion? Even H. G. Wells, who has given some thought to it and is the ablest of them all, writes rot about religion.

To these three classes you may add others. There are the officials and business men who stoutly support revivals and Y. M. C. A.'s, and, though they are not conspicuous church-goers, say beautiful things about religion. It promises to check Socialism and Communism for them. There are also the men who despise all the creeds under heaven and are, precisely on that account, eager to vituperate skepticism and laud religion in order to avert the suspicion of unrespectability. There are all kinds of ingredients in this popular myth that religion is necessary, and nine-tenths of them are insincere rhetoric.

The sincere element is the fear of the godly that life really is menaced by the decay of religion. Of these there are two types, with, of course, shades and gradations from one to the other. The common type is the imperfectly educated real believer in his creed, not only Fundamentalist and Catholic, but Wesleyan and Congregationalist. You might dismiss his fear as merely an echo from the sounding board of the pulpit, as it really is, but he has made it personal. He is quite convinced that individuals and society will arrive at a picturesque condition of ruffianism if religion disappears. We will argue with him.

The other type is the anemic professor who does actually brood a great deal on religion. In fact, he has brooded over it so much that he has hardly any religion left. But he is unselfishly thinking about the mass of the people. *They* need religion. He may even go to church, for the encouragement of the others. His weakness is that he knows a great deal more about the Coleoptera or the Ordovician strata or the Miocene mammals than he does about live young ladies and working men. However, this sort of believer by proxy and the genuine believer are sincere in thinking that religion is necessary, and we will consider the various reasons which they, occasionally, condescend to give us.

OUR PERSONAL MORALS

Let us try, in our usual way, to conceive exactly the meaning of our words. Most religious controversies would be admirably simplified if the disputants first spent an hour brooding upon the meaning of the fundamental terms of the controversy.

Religion, we are told, is necessary for personal morality. Yes, well, *what* precisely is necessary? We at once split these confident

people into three violently antagonistic groups: the Catholic group, which refuses to recognize any other religion as adequate, the blood-of-Christ group, and the Modernist-Unitarian group. All that they agree upon is a useful phrase, "Religion is necessary." That is about as profitable as telling a sick man that medicine is necessary. He wants to know which medicine. These religious people no more agree in their hearts that *any* religion will do than a doctor would say that any medicine will do for a patient. The medicine of the Catholic is in the Baptist's opinion moral poison.

So we not only rule out the great majority of the writers and orators who urge the necessity of religion, since they are either insincere or are economically interested, but we encounter a difficulty at once with the others. They are certainly insincere when they say that any religion will do. The only formula upon which they can honestly agree is, "Any religion is better than none." But if you know these religious folk as well as I do, you know that they do not put much heart into that formula. Mere belief in God, without ministers or a divine Christ, will *not* do, they are convinced. Thus they rule out for us the second group, the anemic professors. They have a sneaking contempt for Unitarianism—a diet, they would say, of cereals and apricots for dock-laborers—and as to Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritualism, Steinerism, Keyserlingism . . . .

So the best thing to do is to use a little robust language and tell them all, in the name of humanity, that we want neither gods nor Christs nor priests nor hells, but we can manage our own business without any of them. That is the proper and only way to settle this question.

We are not even going to say that "we have conducted God to our frontiers, thanking him for his provisional services." His disservice has been greater than his service. It is time that scholars, or any writers, grew ashamed of the crude and hypocritical practice of picking out a few saints who were inspired by the love of God (and the promise of a mighty reward in heaven) or a minority of refined folk who took their guidance from religion. It is either stupid or hypocritical to urge upon us this minority and never glance at the vast majority. The thesis that these people put before us is that religion is necessary precisely for the great majority, not for the refined or educated or naturally amiable minority. I have shown that a moral culture, the Stoic, the Epicurean, the Confucian, or the pure Buddhist, which entirely ignored gods, always proved at least as effective as any religion that ever existed. I have minutely, on contemporary evidence, examined the morals of Europe in every age since it became Christian, and I have shown that the idea that any Christian generation was morally superior to ours, or nearly equal to ours, is a grotesque historical absurdity. I have just read Jeffery Farnol's "Beltane the Smith." Farnol is the

best historical novelist of modern times in the sense at least that he is the most conscientiously historical; and in this novel he depicts life in the most developed and most esteemed century of the Middle Ages. It is a bloody mush of coarseness, misery, violence, and unbridled license. It is a true picture. And from that day to this the world has slowly and gradually improved, almost in exact proportion to the decay of religion. While Christianity made this stinking mess of Europe, the essentially godless empire of the Moors in Spain was proving that *culture* was a real inspiration of honor, justice, and refinement.

That is the second mortal weakness of this cry that we need religion. The first is the insincerity of nine-tenths of the writers and speakers who keep it in the public mind. The second is that it is mockingly belied by the whole of history. I have given this mass of evidence, logically arranged, that the morals of Europe sank into anarchy when it became Christian, improved a little under Moorish and Greek influence, but were still foul when the great decay of religion began in the nineteenth century. Did you ever know any clerical writer or any religious historian to attempt, in the same scientific and orderly manner, to survey the general state of morals from the fifth to the nineteenth century? There is no such book. They dare not write it. And then they unctuously repeat the parrot cry that our morality needs the support of religion.

I have many friends in the new movement which claims that we need religion, but a religion without any doctrines, even a belief in God. Some of its oracles, like Professor Felix Adler, the leader of the Ethical Culture movement, are as bigoted and narrow-minded as orthodox ministers—significantly, these are Theists—and will never have the least influence on the mass of people. Most of them are men and women of fine character, more or less broad-minded (according to their degree of Puritanism), who sincerely think ethical culture *as a religion* is vitally necessary. Many Unitarian and some Congregationalist bodies hold the same position—the good life for its own sake, without any emphasis on God—and large numbers of unattached Agnostics and Theists favor the movement. It is the new white hope of civilization.

Now religion in this sense is small, but it is going to become a serious question. The inexorable pressure of culture will in the course of the twentieth century oust dogmatic Christianity and dogmatic Theism, and the churches will gradually become Ethical Culture societies, still claiming that they stand for religion. Priesthoods do not die. They shrink and evolve. These existing societies will never make much impression on the world that has already ceased to attend church, but the societies themselves will increase in number as churches shed their dogmas and become societies.

The psychology of this kind of religion is in part the same as that which we found for religion in the ordinary sense. The mo-

mentum of the tradition of churchgoing takes some, social considerations take others, and the activity of organizers or leaders brings many others. There is also in this world a kind of vanity of virtue which is, psychologically, just the same as the vanity which others find in vice or dress or sport. Further there are numbers who are convinced that it helps them to remain virtuous if they listen to a man talking to them about virtue for an hour every Sunday and then stand in rows and sing a hymn about it.

And the answer to this last group, the serious people of the new religion, is that most of us get no help whatever from that kind of performance. It rather tends to make us bilious. A second and more drastic answer is that this new religion has—pardon the expression in so august a connection—no kick in it. It offers less motive than a Christian Church does . . . . It has never made up its own mind what is the nature of moral law, yet it says that moral law is the most important thing in life. It has not come to any agreement as to the nature of moral law because, while men like Felix Adler have the fantastic philosophic idea of it, most of their followers know that moral law detached from a divine will is simply social law, and therefore the virtue of chastity as such loses its foundation. The only formula on which these people can agree is, "The good life for its own sake": which either means that honor and honesty pay in the world, or that we think them very pretty in themselves—and that is the very feeblest of all motives that you could offer to people under "temptation."

So that is where we stand. The majority of religionists urge that we must at least believe in God; and that is one of the most disputed and vulnerable beliefs of modern times. The minority say that moral idealism is so fine that it of itself commands allegiance; and that is a kind of language which the mass of people in any modern civilization will greet with smiles.

There is not the least need for either one or the other. Suppose you appointed a committee of scientific men to work out this problem on the methods of a practical scientific inquiry. What would they do? They would at once establish two facts: first, that somehow through the ages moral conduct has not varied with changes of religion, and secondly that there has been a very considerable moral advance in the last hundred years. They would then ascertain the causes of the modern advance, and would at once rule out religion. It is plain as an arc lamp that religion has not had more influence on this and the last generation than it formerly had. It has lost enormously in influence. The millions who do not go to church or read the Bible may or may not have some sort of belief in God, but you know them, and you know what a feeble and unpractical thing it is. General education is the principal cause of the advance. Better and wiser education will mean further advance. The next chief influence is the evolution of higher standards of

character by a minority of lay writers and thinkers, and most of these either had no religion or thought out human problems independently of it.

The other great problem of this practical and scientific committee would be to ascertain why "immoral" people are immoral. The clergy have the most stupid ideas on this point. They do not realize the revolutionary change in the nature of what they call immorality. People do not now so much transgress a recognized law as question whether there is a law. The fiction that the law is universally recognized is as hollow as the fiction that it needs the support of religion. Anybody who now asserts this is lamentably ignorant of the facts of life, and he takes an utterly superficial view of the facts of life. The august and eternal moral law of Emerson or Eucken or Adler has no more existence than the Olympic family. What exists is a moral tradition, handed from generation to generation; and this generation of ours is asking if it really has a more solid foundation than the tradition of royalty or bishophood.

The confusion is made worse by the common habit, especially of religious and ethical people, of insisting that the traditional code of conduct is an indivisible thing of equal authority in every line. Some parts of it are clearly disputable, and the effect of this insistence upon taking it as a whole is that many people reject it as a whole and get confused.

It is, in fact, an open question whether the time has not come to drop the word "morality" as well as the word "religion." Its associations are hopelessly sentimental, antiquated, and antagonizing. It is like the syrupy drinks of our childhood. I doubt if we shall be more successful in giving the word a new and palatable meaning than the ultra-Modernists have been in giving a new meaning to "religion." I should not be surprised if the scientific committee I have imagined would not recommend this course. People will be more moral when they do not know it.

Let us talk plain English. There are a few paradoxical people who say that it will be just as bad to talk about honesty, truthfulness, kindliness,, generosity, justice, and self-control. Apart from the love of speaking or writing paradoxes, which is supposed to be an imitation of Nietzsche—it generally reminds one of children trying to talk to each other in Shakespearean language—these people must mean one of two things. Either they want to find other people honest, truthful, just, etc., in their relations with them, or they don't. If they choose the former, they lay down the law: they recognize that it is desirable that we should all cultivate those qualities. But if they are determined to be "unprejudiced," as they would say—there is much vanity and pose in it—and reply airily that they ask no virtues of others, they obviously mean that they rely on their cunning or strength or the law to hold their own. That ends the argument. We may leave a few young folk the lux-

ury of feeling superior to prejudices in this way. The disease will not spread. Most of us do not contemplate a social order in which our relations with each other will be a series of lies and counter-lies, frauds and counter-frauds, without an atom of mutual respect or attachment. It is not the odor of virtue that attracts us: it is the stink of disorder that repels us.

The quarrel is one of those verbal and hollow quarrels which arise in every age that writes and disputes much. It is not worth discussing further. I am arguing against the religious man, not the Nietzschean (or pseudo-Nietzschean). The religious man entirely agrees with me . . . . What? Yes, of course you do, my friend. You picture to yourself this world in which there would be no recognized standard of conduct but only a battle of cunning and spite and cupidity, and you shudder with horror. You agree that it is a social matter. But you needn't shudder. Men have too much common sense to drift into such a state of things. We don't want the good life (in these respects) for its own sake. We want it, we will have it, and we are getting it in more abundance every decade, for its value. That is precisely why you hope to slip in a word for your antiquated religion. You are offering us crutches. Thank you, we know the need to get along, but we discover that we have legs. If a well-ordered society or a manly and reliable character is so very desirable—you agree, don't you?—why such a roundabout way of getting it? It is medieval nonsense. This is a business age.

THE NIGHTMARE OF SEX

Moralists have been in the habit of distinguishing between social virtues and self-regarding virtues: habits (justice, honesty, veracity, etc.) which are useful because it would be to the profit of all of us if they were generally cultivated, and habits which affect no one but oneself. Any quarrel about the future of the social virtues is negligible. The police will look after grosser breaches—if we look well after the police, which religion never does. And education, public opinion, and the experience of life will secure what does not concern the police.

Once upon a time—and it is not many centuries ago—no one had a pocket handkerchief, even amongst the gentry and nobles, and men made rude noises whenever and wherever they would. Without the slightest assistance from God and his ministers we have altered all that so drastically that a breach of the new laws is almost unthinkable amongst educated people. It is nonsense to say that we cannot socially enforce laws or standards of conduct.

And we shall have the help of other changes which are occurring. A vast amount of sourness of character, hypocrisy, secret cheating, even crime, has been caused by indissoluble marriage or inadequate arrangements for the relief of the unhappily married. When we shift the hand of the clergy finally from these matters

and regulate them solely on social principles, we shall make more progress. The increase and better distribution of wealth also help to reduce crime. In most civilizations the workers and the small middle-class are four times as well off as they were a century ago, and this economic improvement will continue, to say nothing of other possible changes.

All these influences make for a better type of character, by which I mean an habitually just, honest, honorable, generous, firm, truthful, self-controlled character. I do not mean the stained-glass-angel business. How much a man smokes, drinks, or dances, what sort of shows or books he enjoys, and so on, is not the business of the moralist. It has never been considered a "sin" for a man to make a fool of himself, and excess in these things is rather a matter of folly. If we can get more honesty in business and politics, more truthfulness and geniality in social life, more justice in industrial and all other relations, the rest is far less important. The principle, at all events, is clear. When a man's conduct becomes socially mischievous, society will sit on him. It will be done more promptly when we no longer leave it to God.

One of the funniest things about these people who fear, they say, that society will never be able to enforce its laws of conduct is that they are actually making a most tyrannical use of the power of society. They are dreaming of a whole series of prohibitions, and in the name, not of religion, but of morals. These interferences with personal liberty are more provocative of moral rebellion than anything else in the world. Our young folk are beginning to loathe the word "morals," and I do not blame them. It is moralists who are making it necessary to abandon the word morality.

When we get behind words and know exactly what we mean, there is little dispute. Qualities or modes of conduct and character which are highly desirable in order to maintain and increase the amenities of life can obviously be cultivated without any talk about eternal laws and gods and devils. Let children be taught in school the real reason why conduct necessarily has limitations in a social group, and it will be found far more profitable than telling them about the flora of Tierra del Fuego or the dates of battles in the Civil War.

There is only one real controversy: sex. Drunkenness is not a moral problem. In countries which are dealing with it on sensible lines it is decreasing every decade. A hundred years ago, when certainly the majority of men who could afford it got drunk habitually, the clergy had very little to say about it. In Catholic moral theology drunkenness is a "venial" (light) offense unless a man quite loses the use of reason "in a bestial manner"; and even this principle has never been taken strictly. All the fuss about drink, which would have astounded even priests when all the world was

Christian, has originated, like so many other asceticisms, in our skeptical age.

But, as I said, the actual experience of countries which discourage drunkenness without interfering with the liberty of sensible men is that drunkards decrease in number every decade, and are now relatively few. We are concerned with general laws. The man who merely exceeds occasionally, with no damage to anybody except his own head and stomach, may very well tell the moralist to mind his own business. I know Roman Catholics of distinction who have these occasional "binges" and stoutly maintain that neither church nor state has anything to do with the matter. The people who are shocked had better learn a little common sense.

The thing that warps the entire moral controversy of our time is sex. Clergymen are the worst, the crudest, moralists in the world. They do not even know what morality is. But they set the standard, and nearly the whole of our press and periodical literature whoops after them. During a stay in Christchurch (New Zealand) I once found an editorial in a leading paper bluntly telling the local clergy, who were goading the women to a purity campaign, to mind their own business. Such frankness is rare. The whole precious aroma of morals is usually concentrated in the words purity and chastity. The novelist gets his thrill by making the hero reserve his last cartridge to protect the heroine from "the thing that is worse than death." The films win the permission of the police and clergy to exhibit the vamp in all her skin-tight loveliness, or the wicked man just sinking over the languorous heroine on the couch as the picture fades out, by crowding blushes into the titles and subtitles. The papers revel in sex, and groan over it. The British clergy, to the dismay of Fleet Street, have lately got a law passed prohibiting the publication of reports of the evidence in divorce cases (which in England always include adultery), and no politician dared to make a stand against the puerility.

The gods, if there are gods, must rock with laughter at the stupendous spectacle of hypocrisy, stupidity, lying, sneaking into dark places, mutual deceit and mutual fooling. And this is the moral situation in which the clergy take the greatest pride. Your sound education, they would say to me, may reduce crime, and secure more honor and honesty, but it will never either maintain or protect—here the voice sinks to a low vibrant note—the purity of our women.

I have many Agnostic friends who in this respect use the same language as the clergy, yet I repeat that the situation is grotesque. This for two reasons. First, the Christian Era, before our un-Christian days, reeks with sex-license from the fifth century to the nineteenth. I could fill a volume of a hundred thousand words with explicit testimony to this by Christian writers in every age. A large number of the Popes themselves were notoriously immoral

(some for unnatural vice), and the license of prelates, priests, monks, and nuns has been colossal. The notion that Christianity has been a special guardian of purity of women is not a theme for discussion. It is a joke.

The second reason is that just as notoriously the cult of chastity is the greatest swindle, the most widespread hypocrisy of modern times. In England and the United States, the two shrines of modern Puritanism, there are—I reflect and calculate before I put this down—more professional ministers of love than professional ministers of religion. Half the married men seek variety abroad and are acrid with jealousy at home. Three-fourths of our films and novels turn on immorality, and this is merely because the overwhelming mass of the public will have them so. The producer who purveyed only pictures of chastity would face ruin. Catholic films even have to be allusive at times. The best story is always the sexual story. The most popular novelist is almost always the one who refuses to recognize the law of chastity.

The world reeks with rebellion against sex-restrictions and then, with the exception of a few outspoken writers, agrees that our ideal of purity is our noblest possession and religion its essential guardian. I have made no specific research into this, but I think I can appeal to my reader. How often do not the clergy figure in your daily paper in connection with sex-offenses? Do you find professors, doctors, or lawyers in the same position as frequently as you find clergymen? Surely not. I should say that if some person with plenty of leisure cared to compile the lists of cases, he would find that these clerical guardians of our chastity figure in the daily press for sex-irregularities three times as frequently as any other correspondingly large body of professional men. I have three further sources of information. I was once a priest: I have a large acquaintance with medical men: and I have considerable knowledge of the experiences of domestic servants. The clergy are far more immoral than teachers, doctors, or lawyers, and Catholic priests are, naturally, more immoral than Protestant clergymen.

If it were not for this tyrannical obsession of chastity, this cowardly lip-homage, this almost universal cozening of each other, we should settle the matter on sensible and decent lines in a generation. The confusion itself points plainly to one fact: half of us at least are no longer Christians, yet we are pretending that we are under the obligation of Christian law and, knowing that we are not, we secretly ignore it.

Here very many people who are not Christians will demur. I have in mind a distinguished American, one of many men of high character and culture whom I know, and he is as stern on the law of chastity as any saint. He once almost turned me out of his house for defending a certain brilliant writer of amorous habits. My friend is an Agnostic. This chapter, if he ever reads it, will disgust

him; as it will disgust great numbers of Agnostic Unitarians and Ethical Culture people. The law of chastity, they say warmly, is *not* a distinctively Christian law. It is—cosmic—it is—

Well, what the devil is it? I defy them to say in plain English. What Kant or Emerson or Eucken says about it is not plain English. We have got beyond verbiage of that sort. There is a law of justice, of veracity, and so on. We quite understand it. The foundation of it is solid social requirement. But where is the foundation of your law of chastity? It is either in God, in Christ, or in the clouds. John Stuart Mill, the first Ethical Culture philosopher, "the saint of Rationalism," saw that clearly. He gave it up. But he never said so. It is from private letters of his, first published by me in my "Life and Letters of G. J. Holyoake," that I learned it. In 1848 Mill wrote to Holyoake, who was strictly Puritanical:

> The root of my difference with you is that you appear to accept the present constitution of the family and the whole of the priestly morality founded on and connected with it—which morality, in my opinion, thoroughly deserves the epithets "intolerant, slavish and selfish."

In the same year Holyoake took the unusual course of returning several of Mill's letters to him, fearing "they might fall into the hands of the authorities." As Mill had not the least sympathy with Socialism—he was the leader of the Individualists—the sentiments of the letters which scared Holyoake are such as I have just quoted. Amongst his papers, in fact, besides the letter I have quoted, I found half a letter which also escaped his notice. Mill says in it:

> The use of the word "morality" is likely to give an idea of much greater agreement with the ordinary moral notions, emanating from and grounded on religion, than I should suppose you intend.

Well, I am content to agree with the man of whom Lord Morley, comparing him with Gladstone, once wrote (in a letter which he forbade me to publish): "He was as much Gladstone's superior in character as he was in intellect." Mill was in practice and taste a Puritan, but he was inexorable in logic. The law of chastity is "priestly morality" and "emanates from religion." European-American civilization bows to it (in theory) only because Christ endorsed it. He did not, of course, invent it. Every moralist of those centuries, from Pythagoras to Marcus Aurelius, urged it. Three thousand years earlier Egyptians had protested in their prayers to Osiris, "I am pure, I am pure, I am pure."

The real evolution of the idea has never been traced—it is one of those literary tasks I have had in mind for years, but have now no hope of realizing—but it will, when accomplished, make a volume of rare attraction. The first root of it is probably the monogamous tradition of the earliest men which, the practice of the apes suggests, goes back to animal days. Moralists make the silly

mistake of saying that modern tendencies portend a reversion to "primitive promiscuity." On the contrary, all the evidence suggests that quite primitive man was for millions of years monogamous, and it is the moralist's ideal which is primitive. Originally it meant that the sexes were equal in numbers (there was no war), that a man with sheer animal impulses and nerves did not feel the monotony, and that he kept his wife "virtuous" by means of his club and he himself was kept virtuous by his neighbor's club. Then, in time, the mysteries of woman's processes began to intrigue the savage mind, and tabus began to grow. Then the cult of a goddess of love suggested sacrifices . . . .

But it is useless to attempt to trace the evolution here. Civilization took over the law of chastity from barbarism six thousand years ago, and religion adopted it. In its earlier form it was simply —for Egyptians, Babylonians, Hebrews, etc.—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife"; it did not forbid concubines and harlots. In the first millennium before Christ, however, priestly and philosophical ascetics arose everywhere, and "chastity" was evolved. The more philosophers glorified the spirit, the more the flesh was depreciated. The Essenes of Palestine got these ideas from the Persians, and Jesus got them from the Essenes; and two thousand years later this marvelous scientific civilization of ours, this generation which cuts off the heads of kings and boasts of its independence, bows down to the commands of a dreamy and hallucinated young carpenter who spoke at street-corners in ancient Galilee.

One of the next and most piquant stages in the evolution of chastity will be when Modernists have the courage of their convictions. If Jesus was not divine, he may have blundered on this point as he did in regard to the end of the world and a hundred other things. There is therefore no law. The Old Testament authoritatively forbids only adultery; and we agree that married folk should keep their contract as long as they hold each other to it. The belief in God has in itself nothing to do with the matter. It is rather funny, in fact, to imagine the Almighty, if there is one, taking any interest in the copulations of mortals. The religious person does not see the humor of this because he curtly says that God is "holy" and *must* disapprove of such things. He forgets that he has to prove that sexual intercourse has anything to do with holiness. It is precisely the question at issue.

The future, at all events, is clear. The law of chastity, in so far as it is a law for modern civilization, is based entirely on the Old and New Testaments; and nearly the whole of modern scholarship regards them as pious fiction. Even if they do give the words of Jesus, which is hardly credible, his authority has gone. We are working out the clear formulation of social law without the entanglement of laws "emanating from and grounded on religion."

Christians ought, I suppose, to observe their own law—though most of them never did, and half of them do not now and never will—but non-Christians may justly request them to mind their own business. When they try to make it their business by invoking "the voice of conscience" and "the universal moral sense," they talk psychological rubbish. There is no such thing. A man's feeling of obligation is the plain product of education and environment and faithfully reflects them.

And when religious people go further and speak about social consequences, they do but prepare a rod for their own backs. To talk, as some of them do, of an approaching time when women may find the streets unsafe is too silly to be discussed seriously. As to other consequences to women, any injury to them at once falls under social law. The kind of brute who brings grave trouble on a girl and runs away will be hunted down; but women are developing the sense of self-possession, and conception is now easy to avoid.

On the other hand, within ten years writers will turn truculently on the moralists and preachers and ask them to count up, if they can, all the misery and suffering their law of chastity has caused and causes all over the world today, all the joy that mortals might have had in their brief lives and the clergy have persuaded them to sacrifice for an illusory heaven, all the dreary waiting and anemia and nervous disease, all the sourness of disappointment and the feverish anxiety to secure a mate. I never see a trainload of maids returning from their work but I reflect on the ghastly havoc that lies behind all this hollow rhetoric about "the Christian purity of our women." Yes, I admit that religion alone can sustain the law of chastity. The only thing that superstition *can* sustain is superstition.

RELIGION AND PROGRESS

I do not propose to deal here with the vaguest, and therefore most valuable, of the claims of the religious apologist: namely, that religion, the Christian religion in particular, is the progressive principle or ferment of modern civilization, that the Bible is the source of England's (or America's or Germany's) greatness, and so on.

Does any neighbor urge you to see that it is the *Christian* nations of the earth that have been progressive, while the Chinese and Japanese were stagnant, and other races not even civilized? You have the answer. Until the latter part of the nineteenth century the Chinese civilization was superior in every respect to the Christian, and the Christian—to be accurate, a few out of the score of Christian civilizations—only began to make rapid progress and surpass China at the time when they began to discard their Christianity. Does he insist that at all events there was a

progressive principle in Europe and America, and China lacked this entirely until Christian nations communicated it? You have the reply. China's geographical isolation was the cause of its stagnation—the old Greek Christian Empire was just as stagnant when it was isolated—while the close contact of the varying cultures of the score of Christian nations was bound to make for progress; and what has happened in China is not the communication of any Christian element but the extension of this secular principle of clash of cultures to it.

Whatever form this argument takes, I have given you the answer to it. Historically it is an absurdity to couple together the words Christianity and progress; and if you seek patiently what elements there are in pure primitive Christianity which ought to make for social progress, or might conceivably make for progress, you perceive at once how incongruous such a claim must be. The general argument is based crudely on two facts: the material or economic progress of Christian nations since the fifteenth century, which quite obviously has nothing to do with any religion, and the social, moral, and intellectual progress of the last sixty or seventy years, which coincides with, not a revival, but a decay, of religion.

In connection with all such questions, all historical claims of the beneficent action of the Christian religion or any religion, let me urge the reader who wishes to be in a position to answer these fallacies to keep steadily in mind four periods of history. These are: Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B. C., Rome in the first and second (and even fourth) centuries of the present era, Arabian and Moorish civilization from the tenth to the fifteenth century, and the modern period from about 1850 onward. These non-Christian periods were brilliant and progressive. In comparison with these essentially irreligious periods (as regards their inspiration) the record of Christendom is ugly and barren. It was these other idealisms, of Greeks, Romans, Persians, and Moors, that counteracted the benumbing influence of Christ's teaching in Europe and led the world back to the paths of progress.

We have seen all that. I am concerned here only to show how I was, even in the study of long dead periods and cultures, preparing the reader to understand the reply to claims that are made from every pulpit in America today. The question might be approached along a different line. We might ignore the past and, in a purely scientific and sociological manner, analyze the amazing progress of the last fifty years, dissect out its impulses and inspirations, and study these in themselves. This also, however, we have already done. The advance of science is the chief factor, both in its immense multiplication of our resources and in its stimulation of the imagination of the race; and with that advance religion has had nothing whatever to do. Education is the second great factor;

and we saw that it was initiated chiefly by non-Christians, largely opposed by the Churches, and only successful when the secular States undertook it. Not even in our moral and social progress, our new idealisms and philanthropies, is it possible to trace religious influence. Humanitarianism was the impulse; and the roots of this go back through the French Revolution and the Deists to the Renaissance and the Moors, while the sap of it is the blood in the heart of man.

But let us have done with popular apologetics. It is based upon a mass of grotesque historical untruths, fragments of generally antiquated and always ill-understood science, and psychological and philosophical arguments which were abandoned decades ago by psychology and philosophy. At the Fundamentalist level it is—pardon the expression: I can't help it—tripe. At the Roman Catholic level, even in the works of Zahm, etc., it is little better and even less honest. But at what one may call the comparatively respectable and well-meaning apologetic of the higher level—Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists (who are better in America than in England), etc.—it is very bad; grossly inaccurate and reckless in its statements of fact, and scandalously willing to be content with verbiage. At the highest level of all in the Christian world, the Modernist, the weakness for mere verbiage is at its worst. The more these religious apologists know, the less disposed they are to use plain English.

Many of my readers will think that I ought to ignore all these extravagances and consider patiently the claims of a more thoughtful and conscientious minority. This thoughtful minority, which is very apt to be supercilious when one notices the lower apologetic, has little influence and never will have much influence. Its writers are merely silly when they tell me that I am "flogging a dead horse." I am perfectly willing—always striving to be as courteous and obliging as I can—to flog them also, but they ought to know quite well that in examining the claims of popular religious writers and preachers I am not flogging a dead horse, but a very live and sturdy ass. I have too much esteem for this refined religious minority to care a cent about their religion. It won't do much harm. It is the millions who concern me.

However, let us hear what the intellectual aristocracy of the religious world have to say on this subject. It is at once apparent that on the question of the need of religion they say much the same as what they would call their less enlightened Christian brethren. Most of them know that character has really greatly improved, not deteriorated, in the last fifty years of skepticism. They are aware that everywhere outside America crime has been steadily and very materially reduced, and that political corruption, paralyzing the action of the police, is mainly responsible for the unfortunate position in America. They therefore fasten with par-

ticular fervor on the question of chastity and the family and I have shown that any *social* anxiety they profess in this regard is baseless. To their fear that the words of Christ may not receive due attention I am quite indifferent. For me, and the modern world generally, he died a very long time ago.

Let us try again. These people say that our "utilitarian" theory of morals may, when it is properly embodied in education, make people generally just, honest, truthful, and so on, but that there are finer shades or graces of character which religion alone will sustain. Let me point out first that these good people look out of the wrong window because they insist on calling the social theory of conduct the "utilitarian" theory. Yes, I know. Some of the early Rationalists themselves accepted the name. But if you want to repeat it after them, you must ascertain what they meant by utility. It was something very much broader than you mean. Social morality is the better word. The real utilitarian theory of morals is the Christian. It says that virtue pays in another world a dividend of ten thousand percent, with good security.

The social or utilitarian theory of morals simply means that any qualities of character or modes of behavior or reaction which are desirable—which promote the general comfort, amenity, pleasantness or welfare generally—are obviously worth cultivating on that account. Hence our "graces" and refinements of character are either not desirable or "useful," or we will retain them because we like them. I am almost inclined to say that these are the easiest things for public opinion to enforce.

There is here another readjustment of ideas which is made necessary by the change in fundamental beliefs. The sensual man was never a good Christian. I know as well as any how fond of good cheer, and even good liquor, Christians can be. Bryan was a notorious glutton. But it is very far away from the ideal of Jesus and Paul, the oracles of Fundamentalism. The reason is that a man who indulged his senses was more apt to be tempted and to "sin." The new ideas mean a readjustment. A man can be frankly sensual, yet perfectly refined and of high character. Sensuality—I naturally do not mean gluttony or any excess—is neither coarse nor vulgar. It is consistent, as every artist knows, with perfect refinement. Temperately cultivated, it adds materially to the happiness and geniality of life, and has no injurious effect whatever on intellect or character. This a great many of our generation have still to learn. A woman can be quite frank in regard to sensual enjoyment, yet delicate in taste and sentiment and sweet in character. Against the average Fundamentalist, layman or preacher, who eats all he can and uses to the limit of her health (and often beyond) his religious license to exploit his wife's body, it is unnecessary to say these things. Not sensuality, but refinement is what we need to recommend to them. I make my point rather against more liberal-minded

believers and Agnostics who think some shade of asceticism highly respectable and, in some strange way, conducive to wisdom.

On this side the irreligious future is going to make progress precisely in some ways which these people call reactionary. The art of living is to be one of the great lessons of the humanist creed: how to obtain as much happiness as one can during the few decades of sunshine, consistently with the happiness of others—how to find, as the Greeks and Moors found, the just balance of intellectual, emotional, and sensual life.

The plea that this will promote selfishness and thus relax the face of general progress is belied by our whole experience. There never was in the world before such a volume of unselfish service of the less fortunate; and I, a Britisher, have pleasure in acknowledging that in this even when we take account of its superior resources, the United States leads the world. Such lists as I have seen of American educational, philanthropic, helpful organizations are a new thing under the sun. Not out of the decaying creeds has this zeal emerged, but out of that feeling of brotherhood, of sympathy, of humanitarianism which conquers new realms every decade. Drop rhetoric. Forget theories. Study coldly the actual trend of our skeptical civilization since the twentieth century opened, and you will be compelled to acknowledge that it looks as if a far kinder and more wonderful age were now dawning upon the dead creeds and half-empty temples.

CHAPTER XXXII

The Triumph of Materialism

Materialism and Idealism—What Is Matter?—The Supposed Vital Principle—The Human Machine—The Mystery of Consciousness—Determinism and Morals

Materialism and Idealism

FIFTY years of exceptionally industrious and varied study have emboldened me to form a little mental picture of reality. I have, despite appearances, a sense of humor which forbids me to say positively that my little mental picture is true: which would mean that it is an exact copy, as far as it goes, of the reality. I have no pride in it, but glance at it occasionally with a cheerful cynicism, knowing that in a few years this labored product of my fifty years of stress and toil will be a whiff of smoke in the furnace of the crematorium down the road. But I have searched the fields of time and space very diligently and have used every kind of guide: the theologian and the philosopher, the scientist and the historian, the poet and the essayist, the utopian and the stern economist. And, if there *were* some Bank of Eternity in which bets could be registered, I would wager a large share of my heavenly nectar and ambrosia that in a thousand years men will call this the truth about reality.

It is what is commonly called Materialism. To follow the lead of all great thinkers and get as far as possible away from those little bits of reality, those individualities with their individual thrills and throbs about which we make such a coil, let us say that all truth is summed in the two words: Ether exists. Reality is ether. What ether is we do not yet know, except that it curdles into the minute particles or strain-centers which we call electrons and protons, and these form matter, with which our perceptive powers can deal. Stretching to infinity—if there is any real meaning in that word—and running back and forth to eternity—if there is any real meaning in *that* word—is this mysterious ether; and the matter which is formed from it gathers into great globes which, as they draw in, develop such disturbance in their interior that their substance streams out once more over space, from which it was gathered, until, in the course of billions of years, the equilibrium is restored, and the process begins again. It is a meaningless and monotonous process. It is not a mystery. It is a fact.

Thus I think a God, if there were one "behind the universe" or universes, would see the process with the eternal eye; and he would be very much bored. But there is not one ripple on this material ocean that suggests a spirit breathing upon it, if spirits can breathe upon oceans: there is not one single feature of this reality or of its monotonous processes that compels or persuades us to think of a different reality beyond it.

Before these masses of matter, or stars, melt again into the ether from which they emerge they somehow engender a mind in which the universe becomes conscious of itself and a heart which experiences comedy and tragedy. We have not yet even an elementary understanding of this evolution. Later I will tell why even here I do not admit that we have the least justification in thinking that a different or spiritual reality enters the eternal process. For the moment let me merely affirm—admit—that to me, at least, this consciousness is at present very far beyond our power of explanation, and it gives a dramatic interest to the world-process.

Smaller globes roll round in the vitalizing flood from the stars. On their slimy, steaming surfaces the atoms of matter advance from combination to combination, during millions of years, until the first living specks appear. This starts a new evolution which culminates in the appearance of nerve, and this again an evolution which ends in the appearance of the phosphorescence or fluorescence that we call mind. A new universe, an aggregate of separately conscious beings, appears: is appearing, and is found in every phase of its development, probably on millions of the small globes that dance in the stream of sunshine from the big globes. In time these conscious units get adjusted to each other, and live as harmoniously as do the atoms in the germ of life. In the eye of my imaginary God the total story of life on one of these little globes is a single pulse-beat of the eternal life. From part to part of space the story shifts, running to shorter or greater length as the accidents of time permit. Our human story is one of these monotonous chapters in the unending process of the universe. It is not a mystery, though still full of obscurities for us. It is a mere fact.

That is Materialism. I am not dogmatically affirming it, and do not call myself a Materialist. When one reflects that the study of reality, or science, is only a century old, and has a hundred million years or more to run, it tickles one's sense of humor to find people dogmatic. Yet I am convinced beyond ever a shadow of doubt that Materialism is true. And the reason is at the same time the explanation of the title of this chapter. The careful study of reality is a hundred years old; and every single discovery we have made in that time has supported Materialism. At the outset two theories of reality, Materialism and Spiritualism, claimed attention. Every one of the millions of discoveries we have made confirms the

Materialist and refutes the Spiritualist theory. That is what I call the triumph of Materialism.

There is no other subject which so urgently requires careful and dispassionate consideration. This which I consider the final truth about life and reality is bespattered with mud in all our literature, and even the most learned of the writers who disdain and revile it are guilty of quite elementary confusions of thought. Some fancy, indeed, that I shrink from the epithet Materialist only because it is held in such contempt, but readers of this book will know that I express my sentiments with the candor of a child. I have never the palest doubt that Materialism is true, and how I am supposed to conciliate pious people by preferring to put my frame of mind in these words, rather than use the dogmatic title Materialist, it is difficult to see. But this verbal question will, no doubt, answer itself as we proceed.

For the moment what matters is to glance at the quite absurd zeal of anti-materialists and point out their confusion. The chief cause of the confusion is very simple. When men of science call Materialism absurd, you will generally find that they are masters of *physical* science, and they have no competence whatever to say whether Materialism is or is not absurd. In their branch of science, the science of matter and energy, Materialism is supreme. The question is whether it is sound in biology, the science of life, and especially in psychology, the science of mind; and on that point your Millikans and Lodges have not an atom of authority. The late Professor Loeb and the living zoölogist, Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, know a thousand times more than physicists do on that issue, and they call themselves Materialists. But, of course, when a man is defending religion he need not be as scrupulous as a man who is merely defending Materialism.

The real absurdity is on the other side, and it is a good illustration of what I call the chief fallacy about Materialism. I have noticed some very oracular utterances of Professor Millikan on this subject. It is quite simple, he thinks. First, there must be a Something behind the universe because we have searched for a hundred years and not found anything. I replied to this, with becoming diffidence, that (1) the logical force of the deduction does not seem to me entirely convincing, (2) that it seems to me that our century of search has been in the universe and not behind it. However, I've dealt with all that. What concerns us here is Dr. Millikan's next step: that this Something must be spiritual, because it is the source of "spiritual" realities which unquestionably exist in the universe —love, duty, and beauty. You may think that I am caricaturing the expressions of Dr. Millikan—who is a Doctor of Philosophy (or the art of thinking) as well as a Doctor of Science—so perhaps you would prefer to read his words:

> Least of all am I disposed to quarrel with the man who spiritualizes nature and says that God is to him the soul of the universe, for spirit, personality, and all these abstract conceptions which go with it, like love, duty, and beauty, exist for you and for me just as much as do iron, wood, and water. They are in every way as real for us as are the physical things which we handle. . . . In other words, Materialism, as commonly understood, is an altogether absurd and an utterly irrational philosophy, and is indeed so regarded by most thoughtful men.

When we try to make a consecutive argument out of this unfortunate jumble of words—how, for instance, can abstract conceptions be as real as iron?—it must mean that love, duty, and beauty are "spiritual" realities just as wood and iron are material realities. And that is the root of the fallacy. To *assume* that they are spiritual, and say that therefore they are aspects of a spiritual soul and affects of a spiritual God, is "altogether absurd and utterly irrational."

We shall see later why philosophers argue that love, the feeling of duty, and the appreciation of beauty—to express the matter in better English—are spiritual. All that I want to say here is that all this sacred fury against Materialism is based upon the assumption that they are. That is bad enough, but the next step taken by these paragons of clear thinking and austere character is quite childish. Since love and moral feelings and high thoughts and emotions generally are spiritual, it follows, they say, that the Materialist, since he admits matter only, rejects them altogether, and therefore a world won over to Materialism would be a world without love or ideals. One of these brilliant spiritual thinkers, Dr. Warschauer, has drawn out the argument in a way that is almost incredible. He imagines himself sitting next to a Materialist at a concert and, seeing the Materialist enjoy a violin solo, he feels he can, with Christian logic, turn upon the man and say: "There is nothing for you to enjoy—it is only horsehair scraping on catgut!"

That is quite the most bewildering form I have seen given to the argument, but in one form or other it still pervades all our literature. Once we lose our hold on spiritual realities, a woman will have to wear armor and a gun when she goes shopping, our politicians will degenerate, our very professors may lose their delicate sense of responsibility. From California to Maine the beautiful words flow from mellifluous lips and editorial pens, "spiritual realities"; from Palm Beach to Hollywood we are taught to shudder at the prospect of a triumph of Materialism.

And I say that, not only is it a mere assumption that these treasured things *are* spiritual, but the whole deluge of rhetoric has behind it only one of the most slovenly caricatures of an intellectual process that one can imagine. For this reason: the Materialist does not deny the value of, the need to cultivate, high thoughts and emotions; he merely denies that your theory of their nature is cor-

rect. But can the matter really, you ask, be so simple as this? It certainly is. If the whole world concluded tomorrow that thought and emotion are mere functions of the brain, it would not make one iota of practical difference. It is impossible to suggest, in clear English, why it should make a difference, and no one has ever given us a respectable reason for thinking it.

The whole outcry is based upon a fallacy, a double fallacy. One fallacy is that we use the word Materialism in two senses. One is the sense in which I have used it: an intellectual theory of the nature of reality without any practical implications. The other meaning of the word is the opposite to Idealism: the absence of ideals, a gross selfishness. They are two totally different meanings of the word. And the other fallacy is to say that if we come to reject the idea of spirit, we must reject ideals because they are spiritual. It is infantile. There are Materialists, as there are spiritualists, of every type, selfish and unselfish, coarse and refined. Their theory of the nature of mind has, obviously, nothing to do with it. I am, you will say, after the confession I have made, a Materialist; but if any man were to tell me that I cannot on that account prefer temperance and health to drunkenness, cannot ask to have my life warmed with love, cannot think straight and manly action preferable to hypocrisy, cannot feel a keener pleasure in culture and art than in bridge or billiards, I can only retort that he must be the last size in fools. Our age, you will say, or preachers generally say, is Materialistic; and I argue that it is the finest that has yet entered the chronicle of man.

I have already quoted the highest Christian authorities on ancient Greece and Rome to show that their life and idealism were comparable with ours, and that this was due mainly to the Stoics or, in Rome (where the social idealism was greatest), to a blend of Stoicism and Epicureanism. There is, in fact, no other ancient philosophy or religion that the serious theologian studies as a rival to Christianity except Stoicism. But both the Stoics and the Epicureans were dogmatic Materialists. They laughed at the idea of "spirit"! It was a figment of the imagination, they said. And they inspired the world as Christianity utterly failed to do. Next to Zeno and Epicurus as practical moralists, as men who really set nations in a higher level of conduct, are Kong-fu-tse and Buddha; and it was the very essence of their teaching that men should cease to concern themselves about souls and gods and spirits. The next great outflame of idealism was in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and it was due to the Materialists of Paris—Diderot, Condorcet, Helvetius, Cabanis, Holbach, etc. Thomas Jefferson, one of the greatest idealists of the early life of the United States, was a dogmatic Materialist. My friend Dr. Loeb was a dogmatic Materialist and an ardent idealist, and every other scholar of modern times who has been described as a Materialist has been an idealist,

his manly courage and truthfulness contrasting conspicuously with the conduct of his opponents.

Yet in spite of all the logic and all the teaching of history, this miserable twaddle, this musty piffle, about "the dangers of Materialism," flows sonorously from every pulpit and is unctuously repeated in dailies, weeklies, and monthlies. It is the classic bunk of our time. It is a clotted mass of fallacies and confusions, a betrayal of complete ignorance of the facts of social history, a piece of verbiage that reflects on the intellectual vitality of every man who repeats it, a crackling of thorns under the pot when one reflects that our age improves in proportion as Materialism advances.

Further fallacies in connection with Materialism—the word seems to have the effect of paralyzing the pious mind—will be noticed as we proceed. We shall see that it is equally absurd and untruthful to say that recent advances in physics have discredited Materialism, or that there has been some mysterious retreat of scientific men from "the Materialism of the last century," or that Materialism affects conduct by denying the liberty of the will, and so on. The whole subject is as laden with fallacious verbiage as some old post by the sea is with barnacles. I have sufficiently cleared the position for our inquiry. Materialism is neither an inspiration nor the extinction of an inspiration. It has nothing to do with inspiration. It is a theory of the nature of the universe, not a standard for judging the relative values to man of things in the universe. Whether you accept or reject it has no more to do with your esteem of art, culture, and ideals than has your opinion on surplus value or the Einstein theory of gravitation.

WHAT IS MATTER?

The more enthusiastic people are about "spiritual things" the less able you will find them to tell you what spirit is. I invite the reader to try the experiment. Naturally the ordinary believers in spirituality will not be able to give you a definition of spirit, but I predict that if you approach, without giving him time to consult a dictionary, one of those eloquent apostles of, or emphatic writers on, spirituality and ask for a definition of spirit, you will not get one.

Spirit is the opposite of matter and can only be described as such. When mind is said to be spiritual, the only meaning is that it is not material. We have therefore to define matter if we would have a correct idea of the difference between matter and spirit. The most popular definition is that matter is "something which occupies space"; which sounds very satisfactory until you reflect that space is not a sort of empty box into which you put matter—if there were no matter, there would be no space—but an abstract conception. The mathematical definition of a point brings you a little nearer. A point is said in your Euclid to be that which "has no

parts and no magnitude"; but, unfortunately, it has also no substance. It is an abstract idea. Matter is a substance or reality with parts and magnitude (or "extension" or "quantity"): spirit is a substance or reality with neither parts nor magnitude.

It is worth while reflecting on these definitions and getting a clear idea of them. Even the majority of the men and women who are so zealous about spirituality feel a chill when you bring them down to exact definitions. Can one imagine the vital interests of civilization really depending upon the question whether love and duty are quantitative or non-quantitative realities? You get right to the heart of the tangle of silly confusions in which this whole question of the material and the spiritual is wrapped. You see at once that the only issue of any real importance or interest is, not whether the mind is material or spiritual, but whether it is mortal or immortal; and since the great majority even of the philosophers and psychologists who believe the mind to be spiritual, do *not* believe it to be immortal, the controversy becomes rather insipid.

But a new source of confusion has been provided by recent advances in physics. Twenty years ago, when radium was discovered and it was found that the atom of matter is composed of electrons, the cry was raised that Materialism was discredited. The "solid atom," the "indestructible atom," of "dead matter," proved to be very much alive, and to be dissoluble into still tinier particles. Although even university teachers of physics (with a tincture of religion, of course) joined in this cry, it was ridiculous.

If you had asked one of these men to name a couple of Materialists, he would at once have said Professor Haeckel and Dr. Ludwig Büchner. Well, take the two most famous "Materialistic" books of these men: Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe" and Büchner's "Force and Matter." Not only did both men deny that they were Materialists, but both actually predicted that the atom of matter would be found to be composed of tinier particles of something else. Büchner (p. 47) strongly recommends the theory that atoms are compacted, ultimately, of ether, and insists that atoms "consist of units of a higher grade" (p. 49). This was written fifty years before radium was discovered. Haeckel's "Riddle" was written just before the discovery of the real nature of atoms, yet he also maintained that the atoms of matter were composed of particles of a simpler substance and that ether is the ultimate reality (p. 77, cheap edition). I may complete this exposure of the absurdity of the spiritual cry of triumph by pointing out that the men who really *did* call the atom indestructible and final were religious physicists like Clerk-Maxwell and the Christian apologists who built on them; and the reason for it was that in this way they could represent the atom as "a manufactured article" and so prove the existence of a creator! It is one more illustration of the utter superficiality of "spiritual" writers on Materialism.

The discovery that an atom of matter consisted of tinier particles called electrons and protons not only did not cut the ground from under the feet of Materialists, as belated Christian writers still say, but it was precisely part of what I call the triumph of Materialism. Writers who were called Materialists in the nineteenth century—chiefly Büchner, Moleschott, Voyt, and Haeckel—expected and hoped for this discovery. The reason is very simple. There is a natural tendency of the mind to seek one ultimate principle, and these writers, seeing that physics spoke of *two* ultimate substances, matter and ether, were anxious that some closer connection of matter and ether should be established. The discovery of the composition of the atom seemed to be a fulfillment of their hope and prophecy. Many distinguished physicists held that the electrons were centers of condensation or disturbance in ether. Therefore matter was, as I have poetically said, a curdling of either. Ether was the ultimate reality.

Of late years there has been in the sanctuary a fresh cry of triumph that physics has "cut the ground from under the feet of the Materialist." Scientific men began to say that the electron was a "particle of electricity," and so electricity was the ultimate reality known to us. It was quite absurd to call this, even if it were true, a "death-blow to Materialism." The electron, whatever it was, had dimensions or quantity. It occupied space. It was measured and was found to have a diameter of five-trillionths of an inch. It weighed eleven octillionths of an ounce. Physicists were quite free, if they wished, to give a new meaning to the word electricity, which had hitherto been spoken of as an "energy," but quite clearly the electrons were realities or substances which occupied space, or material realities.

But the controversy ran on. In order to explain it I must point out, as I have done at length in my "Marvels of Modern Physics," that modern physicists are so much engrossed in mathematical reasoning that they are apt to take abstractions for realities. They began to say that there was no proof at all of the existence of ether, and that electrons and protons, the tiny particles which compose the atoms of matter, are "energy." The ultimate or only reality that they could find, they said, was energy. Some, like Professor Ostwald in Germany, a distinguished Rationalist as well as physicist, wanted us to label ourselves Energists.

To this I objected, and some of my friends in the physical world agree with me that they are entirely changing the meaning of the word "energy." In every manual of physics "energy" and "force" are still defined as abstract ideas. As Sir Oliver Lodge once said, the only *realities* known to the physicist are matter and movement; and it would obviously be better to say matter in motion, or moving matter. The physicist sees matter at rest (apparently) or doing work (by movements). Its capacity for doing work is its

"energy"; when it is doing work it is displaying "force." They are defined as abstract ways of regarding the movements of matter.

Physicists may, of course, change the meaning of words in their science when they will, but they did not, and from the philosophical point of view the situation became very peculiar. Some went so far as to say that all they actually perceive in the material world is "action"; to which a philosopher, or even a very ordinary person like myself, would justly retort that no one ever saw an action. What you see is an agent, something acting. So, if energy is now to be taken in the sense of something which does work, instead of the *abstract capability* of something to do work, we are not much disturbed.

This will be clearer if I remind the reader what an atom of matter is now supposed to be. It consists of very minute particles called protons and electrons. Than the very minute diameter of the electron I need say only that the proton is many times smaller. An atom of hydrogen, the lightest matter, consists of one proton and one electron. Heavier atoms have a nucleus or stationary center of protons and electrons, packed together, and a number of electrons at various distances from the nucleus. The easiest way to picture the atom is as a sort of miniature solar system, the nucleus representing the stationary sun in the center, and the electrons revolving at tremendous speed round it. But there is another theory, the Lewis-Langmuir theory, which represents the electrons as gyrating rapidly at fixed distances from the nucleus, not revolving round it. This difference does not concern us.

Now, since both protons and electrons have measurable dimensions, they come under the only acceptable definitions of matter. They are quantitative. They occupy space. You may call them energy or electricity or what you like, but they are the material units of the universe. In recent years the strange discovery has been made that the mass of an electron (the quantity of matter in it) varies with its speed. Even this need not disturb us as, unless it were material, it would obviously not have any mass or quantity to vary. In my own opinion this is one of the strongest proofs that the electron in some way arises out of ether, but this is not the place to discuss the matter. In any case, the proton is a fixed measurable quantity: a material reality. We have so far fulfilled the expectation of the Materialists of the nineteenth century. Atoms are dissolved into more minute and homogeneous particles.

And within the last two years ether has been restored to its position. It would not matter in the least to Materialism if there were no ether. We should just recognize that the universe consisted, in the ultimate analysis, of two different kinds of material units, electrons and protons. In the hottest stars the atoms of matter are broken up into these elements, and they come together again to form atoms as the star cools. Astronomy gives us beautiful illustra-

tions of the evolution of matter itself: and the floods of electrons pour out into distant space, and may some day prove the clue to the origin of the great nebulae from which stars are made. However that may be, Materialism has completely triumphed in astronomy. We have wiped out all traces of that "finger of God" which was formerly supposed to be clearly seen in the heavens.

But the mind has a kind of instinct to seek *one* fundamental reality, and, moreover, what we call the energies of the universe (light, heat, etc.) could be best explained as ripples or undulations in ether. Physicists and mathematicians had begun to tell us that they needed no ether to understand light and magnetism and electricity, but in point of fact their explanations were not explanations. They were mathematical formulae, and they left a good deal to be desired. If there was nothing except atmosphere (which counts for nothing in this connection) between the antennae of a wireless transmitting station and your receiving wires, no waves in ether or anything of the sort transmitted from the one point to the other, wireless would be a hopeless mystery. If space were entirely empty between the sun and the earth, it would be quite impossible to imagine how the dancing of electrons in the superheated photosphere of the sun could, as it does, make the face of the earth visible to our eyes and scorch our faces.

We need not pursue this, however. Professor Michelson and Mr. Dayton Miller have, by a most ingenious apparatus, proved that the ether does exist. At the very time when I was venturing to write my complete dissent from the teaching of distinguished physicists and Einsteinians about ether, Mr. Dayton Miller, taking up afresh the apparatus devised by Professor Michelson, was proving the reality of ether. I am, in fact, told by a friend of Professor Michelson's that that very able American physicist holds that his experiments proved the reality of ether years ago.

It is, at all events, now admitted, and so we have three ultimate realities in the material world: ether, protons, and electrons. All occupy space, or have dimensions or extension. Every single cavil at Materialism in this connection is, therefore, discredited. We have reduced all the infinite variety of matter in the universe to three fundamental types. The chemist reduces all material combinations to ninety-two elements or types of atoms: the physicist shows that these ninety-two different atoms are simply larger or smaller clusters of electrons and protons.

The next step that Materialism would like to see would be the proof that the electrons and protons are specks or condensations or centers of some sort in ether. That would be a grand unification of the material universe, for already we have brought all the so-called energies (light, heat, etc.) into line as electro-magnetic waves set up in ether by vibrating electrons. That would complete the triumph of Materialism in the inorganic world.

That this is the real nature of electrons and protons has been held by many distinguished physicists for years, but it is by no means yet proved. In the picture of the universe with which I opened this chapter I spoke of the science of the future. I said that this will, in my opinion, prove to be the case. The one ultimate reality will prove to be ether, in which arise (and back into which may possibly dissolve) the little centers we call electrons and protons. A prominent physicist suggested long ago that they might be minute vortices or whirlpools in ether, one revolving to the right, the other to the left, thus explaining positive and negative electricity. It is one illustration of the various possibilities. But we must not forget that even if we fail to discover any closer connection between ether and these minute particles—if ether, protons, and electrons remain distinct—it makes no difference to Materialism. They are all measurable or quantitative. Materialism has triumphed over every attempt to discredit it on the ground of new discoveries in physics.

Many physicists define matter as that which possesses inertia, or does not move until it is moved. This is not an essential definition. It is simply a description of one aspect of the behavior of what we commonly call matter. A billiard ball will not move until it is pushed. But when we try to work out this in regard to protons, electrons, and ether, we find ourselves checked by the scantiness of our knowledge. This need not disturb us. Ether is obviously, whatever else it may be, something that occupies space, and has parts and magnitude. It is material.

THE SUPPOSED VITAL PRINCIPLE

So far we have not been examining attempts to prove that the immaterial or the spiritual exists. No one ever went so far as to claim that matter had been dissolved into spirit or something that was not material. Religious apologists who picked up scraps of physics and represented this did not know what they were talking about. Even if matter had been "resolved into energy," as some said, or into electricity—which is an absurd statement, as the two billion stars of the universe remain just what they were—we should still be in a world of measurable realities. Planck's quantum theory, which is now generally received in physics, makes energy more material (i. e., more quantitative) than ever.

However, we have cleared up all these misunderstandings, and we have now to consider the arguments of those who hold that the energies or movements of a living thing are due to the presence in it of an immaterial something which they call "the vital principle." We have not to go into all the arguments on this matter, but merely to ask whether the progress of science has favored the Materialist or the opposite theory.

We may simplify the issue by first putting on one side certain

controversies which were settled long ago, though many of the "spiritual" writers do not seem to be yet aware of the fact. There is no serious controversy today about the *origin* of life. Much dust is raised about it by the more ignorant apologetic writers, but it is a legitimate scientific question, and, as the authorities are agreed that the first living things came upon the earth by natural evolution, and the only opposition to this comes from men who rely upon a disputed interpretation of the Babylonian legends in Genesis, we might at once pass on. Some readers may, however, wish to understand precisely what the position is, as they may have Catholic or Fundamentalist friends who still think that there are profound scientific difficulties about the natural origin of life.

Excluding an old suggestion that the germs of life may have come to this globe from other planets, we have only two possible modes of origin: creation or evolution. Seeing that it is now certain that all the higher forms of life were evolved from the lowest, scientific men and all who consult their common sense assume that the earliest living things themselves were evolved from inorganic matter unless there is some intrinsic impossibility. No one has ever shown any. It does not, therefore, matter that we have no direct evidence of the evolution of life or that we cannot make living things in the laboratory today. Scientific men can only speculate as to the series of chemical changes by which, in the course of ages, inorganic matter evolved into simple forms of life. Many do speculate on this, and they—chemists like Professor Armstrong or bio-chemists like Professor Benjamin Moore—say that there is no inherent difficulty.

You may simplify the matter in this way. There are two views about the origin of life. One says that the first living things were evolved and on this all the biologists, chemists, and bio-chemists —a formidable body of experts—are agreed. The other view is that the first forms of life were created. The sole ground for saying this is that some theologians hold that the first chapter of Genesis says so. The great majority even of theologians are opposed to them, and we know quite independently that this story of creation is merely an ancient Babylonian guess. Well, your friend may use his common sense and choose. But if his literature tells him that there is any dispute *in science* about the matter, it is, as usual, lying.

The truth of Materialism here is that, whereas half a century ago scientific men were certainly not agreed upon the subject, and high authorities could be quoted for the creation of life, they are now absolutely agreed upon the evolution of life. Such questions are within the province of the new science of bio-chemistry—the science of the chemistry of living matter—and the effect of its research has been to bring about an agreement.

But this agreement must be properly understood. It does not at all mean that all the experts have become Materialists. Some of

them believe that there is in the living organism a directive or controlling principle which is different from ordinary physical or chemical forces. They do not seem to like the word "immaterial" and they often shrink from the phrase "vital principle"; but it comes to the same thing. They believe that there is something in the living organism beyond the gases and earths which compose its body and the chemical and physical properties of those elements.

When you ask what this is, and where it comes from, you get much verbiage and very little satisfaction. Sir Oliver Lodge talks about a sort of "reservoir" of vital energy which may be drawn upon, but it is a mistake to take any notice of what men like Kelvin and Lodge (who are physicists) say on this matter. As to G. B. Shaw, the great popular apostle of the vital principle, which he calls God, you might as well expect clear economic definitions from Billy Sunday or Bebe Daniels as clear statements on such matters from Mr. Shaw. When he tells the world that Vitalism has triumphed, and Materialism been refuted, in the last few years, he is talking nonsense. He really means that a very wordy philosopher in France, Professor Bergson, wrote a popular book, full of errors, on the vital principle a few years ago, which Mr. Shaw approved, but even the philosophers rejected it. What the real scientific authorities say about it Mr. Shaw neither knows nor cares. He hates science.

The position is, then, that a certain number of biologists believe in a vital principle which is not a material force. Where it came from when chemical evolution had prepared the plasm to receive it they barely attempt to explain. No scientific man now believes in creation out of nothing. The idea is justly regarded as childish. In fact, the leading Vitalists of Germany and Britain, and, I suspect, of America (though these are more reticent) do not believe in a personal God. I refer to Professor Driesch and Dr. J. Haldane. The general feeling of the Vitalist scientists is that this vital principle or energy exists in nature just as electricity or magnetism does. It is supposed to control the physical forces of the body, to direct them in the germ when they are building up the body, and so on.

Before we examine this idea, we must notice a statement of Dr. Osborne in "The Earth Speaks to Bryan." It has been quoted all over America and throughout the English-speaking world as an emphatic assurance on the part of a distinguished man of science that scientific men have in large part abandoned their earlier Materialism and come to believe in an immaterial vital principle. Unfortunately for his credit, Dr. Osborne ventured to give names, and one is amazed at the slovenliness of his statement. His list includes Dr. Millikan (a physicist, who knows next to nothing about Vitalism), Professor Eucken (a German religious philosopher who knows still less), Professor J. B. S. Haldane, author of "Daedalus" (confusing the father, Dr. J. Haldane, a Vitalist, with the son,

Dr. J. B. S. Haldane, who wrote "Daedalus," and is emphatically *not* a Vitalist), and Dr. Walter Rathenau (a German business man who is entirely innocent of such matters). These are supposed to be proofs that experts on biology are abandoning Materialist views and returning to Vitalism! There is no return. The few experts whom Dr. Osborne could legitimately quote as Vitalists—MacBride, A. Thomson, J. A. Haldane, etc.—were Vitalists twenty years ago, and have never been otherwise.

Religion is always at the back of these strained and inaccurate statements of scientific men. Twenty years ago Lord Kelvin, the eminent British physicist, made the same statement in London. He said that "modern biologists were coming once more to the acceptance of something and that was a vital principle." He was at once flatly and publicly contradicted by the three leading authorities in Britain at the time, Sir J. Burdon-Sanderson, Sir W. T. Thiselton-Dyer, and Sir E. Ray Lankester. The latter said: "I do not myself know of anyone of admitted leadership among modern biologists who is showing signs of coming to a belief in the existence of a vital principle." He would say the same today to Professor Osborne. There is no change. A small minority of biologists believe in a vital principle, and have always done so. There is no desertion of Materialism.

In point of fact, if you survey a period of, say seventy years, since the appearance of Darwin, you must admit the triumph of Materialism. In the middle of the last century the overwhelming majority of the biologists and physiologists were Vitalists. The great majority are now Anti-Vitalists. They are not Materialists —they do not pronounce on the nature of the human mind, on which they have no authority—but they reject the idea of a vital principle in plants and animals. This immense change in about half a century from a large majority in favor to a large majority against Vitalism may justly be considered another triumph of Materialism.

One very good reason for the change in the direction of Materialism is that no one can give us an idea of this vital principle which is intellectually satisfactory. You see this plainly in the different names that are given to it by different Vitalist writers; in fact, they now even dislike the word Vitalist, and call themselves Neo-Vitalists. But the "new" theory has just the same difficulties as the old. "Vital Force," as this immaterial something used to be called, and Mr. Shaw still calls it, is a crude expression. A "force" is not a reality and does not do things. "Vital Principle" is merely an evasion. "Vital Urge" (Bergson's *élan vital*) is still worse. Some even go back to Aristotle and dig up the old Greek word "Entelechy." Others play with "Directive Idea," and so on. There is obviously something uncomfortable about the whole theory.

There are three very sound general reasons for this uneasiness

of the Vitalists. The first is that they are merely building upon our ignorance, which is always unsafe and generally illogical, for what is obscure today may be lit up tomorrow. Whatever Vitalists or Neo-Vitalists say, there is only one valid argument for dragging in a vital principle: that there is something in the life of an organism which the physical and chemical properties of its body cannot explain, so we postulate some other kind of agency to explain it. The weakness of this is clear. What we really mean is, not that physical and chemical qualities will not explain something, but that *we* with our present knowledge of those qualities cannot explain it. But our knowledge is growing daily. The Materialist can afford to wait. In point of fact, the majority of biologists prefer to wait. When our knowledge of the physical properties of living matter is much more extensive than it is we shall be in a better position to judge. Meantime Vitalism is not an explanation, but an affirmation.

Men like Professor A. Thomson, who have somehow become popular oracles on science, pretend that some of the discoveries we have so far made favor Vitalism and not Materialism, and they give a quite wrong impression. Professor Thomson is a religious man—as I said, you generally find religion at the back of these things—and is not an expert biologist, but a lecturer on natural history (the exterior of animals, so to say, not the interior). All that such men can say is that there are still, in spite of a century of research, scores of things that we do not understand in the living body. How an oak tree or a peacock is built up out of a microscopic germ is an obvious case. In spite of Weismannism and Mendelism and all the rest I should candidly admit that we do not in the least understand it. There is a great deal of sheer verbiage in these theories of heredity. And we need not select a big and obvious problem like this. The ultimate processes even in the assimilation of food, the contraction of muscles, or the action of nerves, are still obscure.

But how in the name of all that is wonderful does this discredit Materialism? We have learned how to explain thirty things out of fifty, and the explanation is purely mechanical. The remaining twenty are more complicated and at present evade explanation. Surely the common-sense conclusion is that the mechanical explanation of the thirty is a triumph for Materialism, and it gives us some confidence that we shall yet explain the other twenty. Professor Thomson argues that our research into the activity of almost every tissue in the body has brought us to a point where our mechanical explanation fails. If Vitalists think that *they* light up these obscurities by saying that a mysterious vital principle causes the movements, they are singularly easy to satisfy. A mere word explains nothing. They are imitating the medieval wiseacres who explained the properties of water by saying that they were due to something called "aquosity," or thought that the life

of a cabbage is all explained when you say that it has a "vegetative soul." The plain truth is that, as we get near the limits of the range of our microscopes, obscurity is bound to begin in every field of research. Already we are developing a super-microscope, an instrument using ultra-violet rays and quartz lenses, and the line of darkness will be pushed back. What power of magnification will anatomists be using in 3000 A. D., not to speak of 3,000,000 A. D.?

Another difficulty is that, as the variety of names for the vital principle suggests, no one has ever been quite comfortable about the substantiality of this *deus ex machina.* Many try to evade the difficulty by calling it an energy, or force, or urge, or even idea. But we are not children. All these things are abstract conceptions, not realities, but certain aspects of realities. Even the word "principle" is mere poetry. This vital agent is either a substance or an aspect of some substance. It is futile to say that philosophers have discredited the word "substance." What they have discredited is the old distinction between substance and accidents, which enables a Catholic to believe that the smell and taste of wine can remain when the wine disappears. It is a substance or nothing; and no one cares to face the problem of how an immaterial substance is mixed up with a body. The whole Vitalist and Neo-Vitalist school evades these difficulties and simply offers us phrases.

Thirdly, even if we do not press the preceding difficulty, the theory, when you work it out patiently, brings in far more serious problems than it pretends to solve. It is, as I said, a mystery how a body is developed out of an impregnated ovum, and I can understand a man impulsively saying that there must be something else. But try to work it out. Has this something else a plan of what it has to build? Does it somehow communicate this to the atoms of matter? Does it direct the atoms into place, in the developing nerve or muscle, and how? Does it push them into place as a bricklayer pushes bricks? And how can an immaterial agent push or direct them? And would not the vital principle of even the lowest microbe, which is supposed to do what all the science of our time cannot do—make a living cell—be a greater thing than the mind of an Edison? And so on. Once again the only reply is: evasion. Don't press, the Vitalists say. Let us talk vaguely about "directive forces" and "vital urges."

It is a failure from beginning to end, and that failure means the triumph of Materialism. As the next section will show, every explanation that we have really given of vital processes in the course of the last hundred years is a mechanical or chemical explanation. Every discovery has been thrown into the Materialist scale against the Immaterialist. I am old enough to remember scores of obscurities which were once urged against the Materialist—as a Catholic professor of philosophy I myself urged them thirty years

ago—and they have all been cleared up on mechanical lines. The logic is all on the side of the Materialist. Understand his position. It is not that today we can give a mechanical explanation of everything. It is that the mechanical principle has so far made all the discoveries we have made and we have no positive reason for supposing that there are any processes in the living thing that it will not in time explain; but, even if there were, it would not follow that the agent at work in them was not material.

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Many of my readers will have read "The Outline of Science" and may remember one of the leading articles in it entitled "The Body Machine": a summary of the anatomy and physiology of the human body. I wrote that article. Professor A. Thomson, who succeeded me in the editing of the work, and suppressed my name, merely appended to my article, which he used, a note in the interest of his Vitalist views, warning readers not to take the word "machine" literally. But the article remains a most instructive summary of all the wonderful things that have been discovered about the animal body and its life *by working on mechanical lines.* Nothing was ever discovered by means of Vitalist principles.

Here some reader might remind me that Professor Bergson was supposed by many to have thrown a great deal of light on living nature in his "Creative Evolution" by means of Vitalist principles. Not one single phenomenon in nature was explained by him. He followed the usual Vitalist or mystic procedure. Here is some piece of behavior on the part of an animal which science cannot explain: let us attribute it to a "vital urge" or "impulse," and then, of course, it is explained. Those are mere words.

An amusing illustration may be given. The remarkable "instincts" of insects especially fascinated Professor Bergson, as they fascinate mystics generally. Ants, bees, and wasps, particularly, are supposed to afford excellent material to the mystic by their interesting habits. One wasp selected by Professor Bergson was the Sphex, or "wasp-anatomist," which is popularly described (following the ancient observer of insects, Fabre) as having quite an uncanny knowledge. In order to provide fresh meat for the offspring which it will never see, it is supposed to grasp insects and sting them in their nervous ganglia in such a way as to paralyze their struggles without killing them, and then lay them in the nest with the eggs. How does a wasp come to have this knowledge of the position of the nervous ganglia? The "vital urge," said Bergson; although, curiously enough, he does not seem to give this vital principle itself any intelligence. However, the point is that some years before Bergson wrote this book, the old story had been corrected. More patient and extensive research on the part of two American observers had shown that the wasp merely jabbed its

sting anywhere into its struggling prey; in most cases it did not touch the ganglia.

There are, however, a great many "instincts" of animals, especially of insects, that we cannot explain. I put the word instincts in inverted commas because it is now hardly ever used by scientific men. The idea that there is a "faculty" or something in the bird which "tells" it to build its nest, or in the ant which "tells" it to store food and assign nurses for the eggs, is now abandoned. Instinctive behavior is as automatic as the lifting of your hand when a speck of dust brushes against your eye, or the budding of trees in the spring: the animal receives a certain stimulation, and it reacts to this by movements of its muscles as automatically as a plant grows round an obstacle. In simpler cases we trace the mechanical course of the action quite easily, and we have no reason to suppose that it is other than mechanical even in the case of the ant, the bee, the wasp, or the beaver.

I will give a case which is not wholly simple. A moth enters your room on a summer's night, sails round and round the room, and finally dashes against the lamp or commits suicide in the candle. The "vital urge" is hard put to explain these things. But it is a simple mechanical action. The moth is a flying machine with motors for both sides of the body and an eye for each side. The light falling on one eye stimulates the motor for one side, and it sails round the room, just as a boat would with only one of its two screws going. Let the moth, however, chance to face the candle in its erratic movements. The light then falls equally on both eyes, stimulates both motors, and the moth heads straight for the light.

We have explored and explained a very large amount of animal and plant behavior on these mechanical lines, for light is only one of a number of different stimulations. Hundreds of thousands of experiments along these lines have been tried, and a vast amount of animal "psychology" has been explained. Some of the highest authorities now question whether insects have any consciousness whatever. That they have no "intelligence" was settled by experiment long ago. They seem to be, in the language of modern physiology, simply chemical machines.

The human body is full of mechanisms like any other body, though in our case intelligence has generally superseded instinct. From the moment, for instance, that food enters the mouth—indeed from the moment when appetizing food meets the eye or tickles the nostrils—until the moment when the nutritious particles are assimilated and the refuse ejected, a long series of most intricate and ingenious mechanisms is called into play. From the moment when light falls on the eye, or waves of sound break upon the ear-drum, or particles of odorous matter enter the nostrils, until the hand is raised for appropriate action, there is another series of mechanisms at work. But nerve is much more difficult to

understand than muscle or gland, and the nerve-stuff in the brain, which is the most complicated matter in the universe, is even more difficult to explain. Significant, isn't it, that the Vitalist finds his phenomena just where the material structure is most obscure?

But even here all progress is in the Materialist direction. Take the problem of embryology. From a fertilized ovum (or egg-cell) in a woman's womb there is developed in the course of nine months that most amazingly complex structure, the human body. Although Mendelist science has certainly helped us in some ways in discovering that there are special particles in the germ for each section of the body that is to be constructed, it is futile to say that we are appreciably nearer understanding how a germ creates a body. But some very remarkable work has been done in what is called "experimental embryology," and it does not in the least favor the idea that there is an immaterial principle in the germ which directs the physical and chemical forces.

One striking result of experiment is the discovery that we can dispense entirely with the male germ, or spermatozoon. The reader will know that a female ovum does not begin to split up and begin to form a body until a male cell enters and blends with it. This was naturally thought to be the explanation of the fact that the young inherits from the father as well as the mother. Both germs were thought to be of equal importance. But scientific men were astonished when they discovered that if the ovum is pricked with a needle—other mechanical or chemical stimulations have the same effect—it begins to divide just as if it had been fertilized by a male, and it goes on to form a complete normal body. Star-fish and sea-urchins are the animals most commonly used in these experiments, as it is easy to control the sperm, but Professor Loeb found that frogs' eggs could be "fertilized" in the same way, and he sent me a photograph of a two-year-old frog, normal in every respect, which he had produced from an egg without a father. Up to what level in the animal world we can produce this result we do not yet know. The imagination reels at the conjecture that we may yet accomplish it with the human ovum.

In many other ways experimental embryologists have brought out the essentially mechanical nature of the construction of a body from a germ. Dual animals, half animals, and all kinds of perversions and distortions of the embryonic process, have been caused. It is not simply that the experimenter is interfering with the attempt of some immaterial force in the germ to realize a plan. He is interfering rather with mechanical forces and so misdirecting their play that they cause all kinds of monstrosities. Experimental physiology—experiments on the living body of adult animals of the lower (and unconscious) types such as sea-anemones, worms, etc.—has led to similar results. The working of the forces inherent

in the organism is altered just as mechanically as we can alter the combination of chemicals.

This mass of research and experiment, which in every particular confirms the Materialist view of the animal organism, has been strongly reinforced in recent years by the discovery of the ductless glands. There has been such an extensive public interest in one pair of these glands, the thyroid glands, that the reader will have some idea of what we mean by these ductless or endocrinal glands. They are very small glands in the interior of the body which secrete from the blood minute quantities of certain substances, or manufacture these substances from the chemicals they extract from the blood, and they then pour the result directly into the blood-stream. The circulation of the blood carries these precious essences through the system until they reach the organs for which they are intended. The tissues of these organs extract them from the blood as it flows through, and are stimulated. As a scientific writer said, it is a kind of postal service in the body. We have long known that in our nerves we have a telegraphic system. Now we know that in these *hormones* (as the mysterious essences produced by the glands are called) we have also a postal system.

These glands have turned out to possess an importance which, in view of their size, scientific men had never suspected. It has been known for decades that the thyroid glands, in the neck, have a surprising influence on mental vitality, and thyroid extract (generally from sheep) has been used from the beginning of the century in converting cretins (congenital idiots, or children born with abnormally feeble thyroid glands) into normal children. It is an extension of this discovery in recent times which has led to all the popular interest in the glands as a possible means of renewing the vitality of the aged. But it is only in recent years that we have discovered that the thyroids are only one of a number of pairs of small glands, or single glands, which have a remarkable importance. There are the thymus glands (which regulate nutrition and blood-pressure in the young), the parathyroid glands (which help to keep the balance of nerve and muscle, and are essential to life), and the adrenal glands (which control the blood and help to resist poison, and also are essential to life). Then, in the brain, are the pituitary body, which seems to control growth (especially of the bones), and the pineal body, which seems to have an influence on bodily and mental development. Some of these minute organs are probably what we call "vestigial organs," or vestiges of organs which were useful in a different way in a remote animal ancestor. Their evolutionary significance as such remains just the same, although they have taken on new functions.

Corresponding to these glands are the minute quantities of chemicals in our food which we call vitamins. Some of them are a kind of special diet of the glands, and are correspondingly impor-

tant. When we have mastered the chemical constitution of vitamins and hormones—when we can produce either the vitamins or the gland-products in the chemical laboratory—we shall be able to work wonders. The moron can be doctored out of existence, and it may transpire that we can raise everybody's mental level. All that I am concerned with for the moment, however, is that this discovery merely crowns a long series of discoveries which tell in favor of Materialism. We are extending the mechanical explanation of the life of the body every decade. We are discovering new mechanisms which explain what were thought to be mysterious vital functions. We have found that the milk appears in a mother's breast just when it is needed because the foetus secretes and passes into the mother's blood a certain chemical which stimulates her milk-glands. In every department of the body we are finding such mechanisms, and there are few physiologists in the world who will now admit that a "vital principle" is needed or would explain anything if we admitted it. The whole progress of physiology has been a triumph of Materialism. Science is still young, and plenty of obscurities remain, but all that we have actually discovered is mechanical. The Materialist has thousands of facts to support him. The Vitalist builds only on obscurities, or on things not yet discovered.

THE MYSTERY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Physiologists prefer to say that they give a "mechanical" rather than a "Materialist" explanation of life, because Materialism means a comprehensive philosophy of the universe. It means that spirit does not exist anywhere. With that the physiologist is not concerned. The mental life of man does not fall within his province. It is the subject of psychology. What the physiologist says is that by his research he has explained the greater part of the life of the body as the functioning of a system of mechanisms: he has never made any discovery or explained anything on Vitalist lines: and he has every logical reason to believe that the remaining obscurities will be cleared up on mechanical lines. It is quite absurd to allege that there is a revival of Vitalism amongst biologists or physiologists just at the time when we have discovered a new and more remarkable set of mechanisms, the ductless glands, in the body. That discovery is the strongest of all encouragements to Materialism.

When we thus speak of the body as a machine or mechanism of which life is the function, the inexpert reader is apt to be misled. He thinks of the metallic machines with which he is familiar. In fact, even the apologetic writers, who know hardly more of these matters than the general public does, make the same mistake and say very foolish things. How, they scornfully ask, can a machine reproduce itself, or even repair itself? It is a very super-

ficial jibe. They are thinking of a steel or aluminum or copper machine. By machine in biology we mean a coördinated material structure, its various parts working in harmony, but of such very different material from rigid metals that its action depends essentially on the chemical changes in its elements. We mean a chemical machine. How even this can reproduce itself we do not yet know, but, as I said, to suppose that there is an immaterial principle in it does not help us in the least, and all experiment goes to show that the building of the new body is a mechanical process.

The Materialist has, therefore, every reason to believe that the world of life is as material as what we call the physical or inorganic world. No sound reason has ever been given to suppose that life is due to an immaterial principle. The serious outstanding question is the nature of mind. For the Materialist mind or consciousness is a function of the brain. Even writers who ought to know better sometimes disdainfully speak of this theory as a bit of the discarded Materialism of the last century, or even the eighteenth century. It is, on the contrary, the express conviction of more distinguished men of science in our time than it was in the last century. I have already cited Dr. Loeb and Dr. Chalmers Mitchell.

My own attitude is clear from what I have said. It seems to me that we have not, as Loeb pressed me to admit, *proved* that mind is a function of the brain or explained consciousness as such; but our progress in the explanation of mind all tends in that direction, and I have not the least doubt but what Dr. Chalmers Mitchell (following an older writer) says today—that the brain produces thought as surely as the liver produces bile—will be amply proved in time. Here I can give only a few general considerations which will help the reader to think clearly on the subject.

The chief enemy of Materialism here is philosophy. Metaphysicians or philosophers are always anti-Materialistic, and, as they are supposed to be our "thinkers" in the highest sense of the word, the reader may be much impressed by their general opposition to Materialism. The man of science, of course, does not care two pins about their opposition. He (as Sir E. Ray Lankester did) defines philosophy as equal to the effort of a blind man in a dark room to hit a black cat which isn't there. As an old professor of philosophy I am better aware of its value as a mental training, but the fact is that it makes no discoveries. It is a collection of antagonistic theories. I once invited a philosopher with whom I was engaged in controversy to fill a single sheet of note-paper with truths on which all philosophers are agreed. He declined to attempt it. Science, on the other hand, could fill a library with discoveries or truths on which all the experts are agreed.

But if the philosophers are at least agreed that the mind is a spirit, we must surely pay serious attention to them on that point.

This is not at all so obvious as it seems. What *is* spirit? As I said in the first section, spirit can only be defined as something that is not material, and therefore what the philosophers unanimously assert is really this: that thought is not a product or function of the material brain. Well, what do they know about the brain? There is not a single living philosopher who has a respectable command of our actual scientific knowledge of the brain. They disdain science just as science disdains philosophy.

Now if I am right in my way of putting the issue, this physiological ignorance on the part of the philosophers means that half the dogmatic talk about the mind as a spirit rests on a very unsafe basis. Mind is either a function of the brain or it is the activity of something which, though bound up with the brain, is not material. By all the rules of logic and common sense we are bound to assume that it *is* a function of the brain until proof is given that it cannot be such. Let me emphasize the fact that the Spiritualist is really making a dogmatic negative statement. In fact, both sides are: and that is why I prefer Agnosticism in such matters. The Materialist says that spirit does not exist; and at least he has this in his favor that philosophers and theologians have been trying for two thousand years to prove its existence and have not succeeded. The Spiritualist makes the dogmatic statement that the brain could not produce thought and therefore we must introduce spirit.

This is, of course, not the actual way in which philosophers argue; that is to say, when they *do* condescend to argue on this point, for as a rule they just assume that the mind is a spirit. We might take Professor Eucken as a good illustration. He teaches at Jena, where Professor Haeckel was the most respected personality, and consequently Eucken was compelled by Haeckel's influence to attempt to prove, instead of assuming, that mind is a spirit. What is the proof? It is a vague claim that the world of ideas and emotions which we perceive through our consciousness is of a "different order," or on a "different plane," from the world of material realities. One set of realities is "qualitative" and the other "quantitative." Arguments of this vague kind would not be admitted in science. They are no better for attaining truth than they would be in the detection of crime or the promotion of business. We always come back to the same point. Thoughts and emotions are of a different or a qualitative order only in the sense that we have not yet proved them to be quantitative.

Here we are at the heart of the real mystery or obscurity of consciousness. We look outward upon a world of moving masses of matter which can be weighed and measured. Then we look inward, or reflect, and we find a world of mental acts to which no material standard seems to apply. They are two different orders of reality, say the philosophers. The basis of one is material reality and of the other spiritual reality. That is really the only argument for

spirit. But it begins to weaken the moment you press it. The Materialist suggests that thought is a *function* of the brain, and here you at once get a difference. To return to Professor Millikan's arrogant language about Materialism, when he says that love and duty and beauty are as real as iron and wood, you see the fallacy at once. Iron and wood are realities or substances: thoughts and emotions are functions of a reality (whether material or spiritual) or substance. Naturally we will find a difference.

This is well illustrated by the developments of modern psychology. My readers will have noticed that I have not all the respect for that science which it at present enjoys. In taking mind for its object it has taken the most obscure phenomenon in the universe, and it gets out of the difficulty at many points by giving verbal instead of real explanations. There is a very great deal of empty verbiage in what is called psychology. It is as yet only half scientific: the other half is metaphysical. But the serious and substantial progress of psychology is significant. It began as the science of mind, and mind was a spirit. Before the end of the nineteenth century it was no longer the science of mind, but of mental phenomena or states of consciousness. It ceased to talk about an underlying something, a mind or spirit of which these ideas and emotions were acts. Now it barely notices even consciousness. It deals with a world of psychic units and has no interest in such old questions as the nature of mind or the spirituality or immortality of mind.

I regard this as a triumph of Materialism. The very science which set out to apply our modern exact methods of research to the mind has failed to see any evidence of spirit. It refuses to discuss the nature of the acts which it describes and classifies and correlates. It thus leaves them as quite possibly what the Materialist supposes: not realities, but functions of a material reality. Sooner or later psychology will be forced, because it is a science, to take some notice once more of those questions. We do, after all, want to know what mind is. We want to know what is the relation of mental phenomena to other things in the universe. We want to know why all these atoms of psychic life, these ideas and emotions, are so very intimately connected that each of us is convinced that they are acts or possessions of his own single personality. Our consciousness tells us this as clearly as it tells us that they exist. We want to know why each particular collection of ideas and emotions —mine and yours—began twenty or fifty years ago, and just when, as witnesses tell us, the brain began, and made progress in clearness and efficiency just as it did.

All these inquiries so strongly suggest that the brain is the only basis of mental life, that some philosophers take refuge in what is called idealism. Mind alone exists, they say: matter is only an idea in the mind. No group of philosophers is more supercilious about

Materialism than these Idealists, but their position is really absurd. It is humorous to find such thinkers imagining themselves "profound" and saying that Materialists are "superficial." Such a science as astronomy is a fairy-tale for children, and all astronomical research is a waste of time, if the universe exists only in the mind. History is merely another dream on which time is wasted. Literature and art are colossal illusions. If I cannot get beyond my own mental world, then *I* composed "Hamlet" or the "Iliad" or Kant's "Critique" or the "Kreutzer Sonata." And it is no use thinking that some modified version of this Idealism must or may be held. The very essence of science is precise measurement and perfectly definite description of objective reality. Unless our study of electrons and protons in an atom is a study of external reality in every detail it is a waste of time.

We have, therefore, on the spiritual side only the complete failure of psychologists to find any other basis than the brain for the unity and connectedness of each individual's mental life, and the complete failure of philosophers to prove that the mind is something more than a function of the brain. On the Materialist side we have hundreds of things which suggest that mind *is* only a function of the brain. More than half a century ago Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing as a medical man, published a most effective little work ("Mechanism in Thought and Morals," 1871) on these lines, showing how mind varied with the brain as faithfully as the shadow varies with the body that casts it. This evidence could be doubled or trebled today. Haldane says in his "Daedalus" (p. 34) that during the war the German scientists discovered that a dose of acid sodium phosphate enormously increased a man's vitality, and it is now taken habitually by thousands of people. Cocaine is another example. But more important even than these are the thyroid and pineal glands which I mentioned in the last section. And still more important is the fact of the evolution of mind which I discuss in other books. From the microbe to Shakespeare there has been a quite continuous evolution of mind. There is no sudden advance anywhere to suggest that a "spirit" has at that point been introduced into the universe. Evolution, like all great discoveries, is entirely on the side of the Materialist.

If it is said that these things only prove the dependence of mind on brain, which everyone admits, we may again contrast the Materialist and the Spiritualist positions. The Materialist position is clear and free from verbiage. Mind is a function of brain, so this intimate correspondence is natural. But on the Spiritualist side no one has ever been able to give even an elementary explanation of it. All that we get are figures of speech, and every one even of these is inept. We are told usually that the relation of mind and brain is like that of musician and his instrument. There is, even in the Spiritualist hypothesis, not the slightest analogy. The musician

is distinct from the instrument and works it by physical contact. If you say that it is the *mind* of the musician which works it, you simply come back to the starting point: is mind a spiritual reality, or do you really mean that the musician's *brain* plays the instrument? No one has the least idea what a spirit is, how it can be bound up with matter, how it can possibly move matter, why a spirit should be more capable of thinking than a brain is, what the function of the brain really is if it is not thought, and so on, and so on. The spirit-hypothesis explains nothing and creates scores of problems.

These "profound" people make me smile. They are playing with mere words half their time. The Materialist sticks to realities. Where the realities are still obscure he can afford to wait. All progress is in his favor. If a logician dealt with the question in the abstract, and summed up all the discoveries which suggest that mind is a function of brain, he would say that the chances are a thousand to one in favor of the Materialist. That is where I prefer to leave the matter. Is it necessary to have any 'ism? If you think so, it seems much safer to choose Materialism. It has triumphed in every discovery we have made. But many will prefer, like myself, to say just that, and leave the job of putting a definite label on the entire universe to the scientific men of the year 3000 A. D. or even 30,000 A. D. The race will still then be in its infancy.

DETERMINISM AND MORALS

A few reflections must be made on the question whether Materialism would not lead to demoralization because it implies Determinism or the denial of free will.

Most of us are unmoved by these attempts to prove that this or that will lead to demoralization. The Individualist is sure that Socialism means ruin, and the Socialist that it is the only means of social salvation. The Protestant despairs of the future of society if Catholicism makes any progress, and the Catholic is supremely confident that his faith is beneficent. And so on. You have the same flat contradiction between the opponents and the defenders of nearly every creed or theory. A hundred years ago conservatives predicted ruin from democracy and every one of the things that has actually improved the world. And against these scores of different prophets of demoralization rises the sufficient fact: there is no demoralization.

We must, however, devote a few pages to this question of free will, though most of the anxiety about it which apologists profess is entirely insincere. And the first point is that the proper experts on this supposed liberty of the will are our psychologists, and it would be difficult to quote a modern psychologist who believes in it. They have come to this conclusion, not in virtue of any general theory of the nature of the mind such as Materialism, but because

modern psychology analyzes mental processes more deeply than philosophers ever did. They are men of science. They realize that the witness to our freedom which consciousness is supposed to give us is not at all a clear and unambiguous testimony; that the words "free will" are found on analysis to be loose in their meaning; and that the claim of free will means in the last resort something which is impossible.

What do I mean when I say that my mind assures me that I have "free will"? Let me say first that "will" in the old sense is not recognized in modern psychology. The mind has no such "faculties" as the older psychologists used to describe. As I have already said, modern psychology goes, perhaps, a little too far when it sweeps aside the mind as well as the faculties, and recognizes only acts. An act implies an agent. However, we need not discuss that point here. What I mean when I say that I have free will is that I can go to town by train, street-car, or automobile, as I choose; that I can spend my vacation at any one of a hundred places the names of which lie before me; that I can buy a bottle of wine or some other illicit pleasure if I choose, and avoid it if I choose. There is, I say, no compulsion.

That is just the point. There is no compulsion of which you are directly conscious, yet the moment you begin to analyze the testimony of your own mind you see that the matter is not so simple. You have five dollars to spare, let us say, and you reflect that you may (1) go to a good show, (2) visit a young lady, or (3) buy something for your wife. You are free to choose, and, when you act, it is on your uncompelled decision. But in this you go beyond the real witness of your consciousness. All that it tells is that your mind hesitates between the three, and that eventually one is accepted. Most of our actions are automatic. Even where there is a slight hesitation—between the street-car and the train—the action is plainly automatic. In your mind, possibly subconscious mind, the motives or inducements are fairly equal, but one prevails. And, no matter how long you hesitate, feeling a sort of lordly dominion over your actions (just because none of the alternatives is so definitely more attractive than the others as to issue at once in action), the end is the same. There was a motive for your action. It was no more "free" than when you rubbed your knee after knocking it against a chair. The only difference is that in the latter case there is no alternative course of action to check your impulsive movement. But your act, even if you deliberate for hours, has a motive. The brain-process which initiates your action has an antecedent brain-process which is the motive or cause of it; and this much would have to be recognized even if you believed the mind to be a spirit.

The strongest motive wins in a struggle. You may say that, just to prove your freedom, you will choose the alternative which

seems to you less attractive; but you have merely thrown into the scale a new motive. A free act in the sense in which theologians use the word would be an uncaused act. They are not even consistent with their own principles. They evade the very difficult question, how spirit can act on matter, by pleading that spirit does not act *on* matter, but *with* matter, as soul and body are substantially united; then, when they come to free will, they want us to admit a series of nerve-processes (leading to the muscular movement or act) initiated by the soul alone! It is not only inconceivable, but false. The nerve-process which represents the victorious motive initiates the executive nerve-processes; and the testimony of our consciousness is quite consistent with that scientific interpretation of what takes place.

Equally futile is the contention that we cannot punish criminals or children unless we grant them liberty of will. As regards children, the age-old practice of punishment is a relic of barbarism. I have raised four fine children and never punished one, even with my tongue. Others tell me that there are children who need punishment. I wonder. In some of the special schools of America for such children marvels have been done by intelligent treatment where years of punishment were merely making a criminal. The whole practice is dying. Even if there are cases, which I doubt, in which a child cannot be deterred from wrong-doing except by punishment, to administer such punishment would not in the least be inconsistent with Determinism, as I will show presently. But probably there is no real need. Not so very long ago it was generally thought that a wife must be beaten occasionally. Our modern sentiment is that the man who lays a finger on his wife is a beast. We are beginning to think the same about children.

Children's acts are, in any case, automatic, and it may be thought that the adult criminal offers a more serious problem. Not at all. The whole tendency of modern penology is to soften the rigor of punishment for crime, and everywhere, except where special political conditions give rise to abnormal circumstances in America, crime is rapidly decreasing. This problem of crime and religion I consider in another book, and all that I need note here is that, even if we decide that severe punishment is necessary for the repression of crime, the matter has nothing to do with Determinism. The punishment is no longer regarded in any civilization as vindictive. It is deterrent—or else it is unjust. When all men believed that God inflicted punishment for sin, obviously not as a deterrent, but as vindictive punishment for "wounded majesty," society naturally dealt with its rebels in the same way. We do so no longer. The only question with us is whether the attaching of a certain penalty to theft or violence is not a good means of deterring men from crime who might otherwise be disposed to commit it.

Of rewards we say the same thing; though here again the idea

itself conflicts with modern sentiment. In any case the reward is meant to provoke effort. Even in the case of prizes to girls for remaining virtuous, as there are in France, the idea is that the prospect of a hundred dollars or so will be an additional motive in the mental scale, counterbalancing the attractions of a year of liberty. The mind of the pious maid is often so delicately balanced between heaven and the embraces of a lover that a hundred dollars turns the scale: to say nothing of the prestige of having one's virtue broadcast through the press.

Praise and blame must be regarded in the same light, if any man feels that he must indulge in those moral luxuries. We are growing out of these things, except in the exalted atmosphere of complimentary banquets. To blame an employe has nothing to do with Determinism. It is sound psychological business. To blame one's husband or wife, or even the husband or wife of a friend, is just as obviously in the nature of a deterrent. Your expostulation becomes an additional motive in his mental balance and may turn the scale on the right side. All such things are, if anything, actions taken strictly on Determinist principles.

But I do not want the reader to imagine that all is clear as noonday in this matter of free will. Every man of strong vitality is conscious of what a modern psychologist has called a "power of self-orientation." Henley's lines:

> I am the master of my fate,
> I am the captain of my soul,

or Shakespeare's "I'll take up arms against a sea of troubles," express something that is within our experience. It does not imply free will, in the old sense, for that would mean an uncaused act. What precisely it does mean, and how this seeming power of self-determination has been evolved in an automatic world, are questions of the psychology of the future. The last thing in the universe which the mind will understand is itself. If the mind were a spirit, that would be a paradox. On Materialist principles it is a platitude. For the mind is the function of a structure which is so enormously more complex than anything else in the universe that it will necessarily take longer than anything else to understand. The very obscurity of mental phenomena is a triumph of Materialism. It is just what the Materialist expects.

Finally a word must be said about what is called the Materialist determination of history. In so far as this is a Marxian economic theory—in so far as it traces all the features of an age or a society to its economic arrangements in the stricter sense of that word—it obviously cannot be discussed here. But in the broader sense it concerns us, and it is one more triumph of Materialism.

Modern history is a massive application of the Materialist principle. Environment is used on every page as the clue to historical

developments. I have in other books, and especially in "The Evolution of Civilization," etc., shown what a flood of light the study of material surroundings has thrown on history. The last Ice Age and the material conditions of Egypt, Babylon, and Crete, of China, and India, explain the beginning of history in each case. Earlier still the pre-history of man is mainly interpreted in terms of changes in his environment and habits. I have shown the same in regard to the rise of Athens and of Rome, the development of the Moorish civilization in Spain, the triumph of the Teutons over the Romans, of the Arabs over the Greeks, of the Turks over the Arabs. Geographical position, climate, soil, minerals, rivers—these are the clues we follow now in interpreting the history of cities or nations.

Whether we can say, as is often done, that the Materialist factor explains everything in history depends, not upon the facts, but upon one's theory. For the convinced Materialist everything *is* material, so the question is closed. For the Spiritualist mind is a spirit, and mind is certainly a factor in history. The ideas of Franklin, Paine, Washington, and Jefferson, for instance, were very important factors in the history of America. The ideas of Marx were very important factors in the history of Russia: the ideas of Mussolini in the history of Italy, and so on. It is plain that if one is asked to decide whether every historical factor is Materialistic, one must first say whether or not ideas and plans are material realities. I think they are, but I leave the dogmatic answer to such questions to a generation that will know ten times as much as we do.

It is at least clear that the modern Materialistic emphasis on environment has been a splendid social factor. It is the last triumph of Materialism that I have to record. Old Robert Owen begged Europe and America a hundred years ago to see that "man's character is made for him, and not by him"; and made by his domestic and economic conditions. How Materialistic, said the clergy! But the world was in a sorry mess after they had been guiding it for fourteen hundred years on the theory that man has a soul and free will, and you have simply to present your moral ideal to him. We have, instead, tried the improvement of his environment—his home, workshop, purse, recreations, schools, baths, clothes, etc.—and we have done more in a hundred years' application of this Materialist philosophy than parsons had done in a thousand years. Yet, Sunday after Sunday, they still drone about the horrid dangers of Materialism!

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